Gurumat Siddhant

गुरुमत सिद्धांत

A Science of Spirituality Scripture for the Dawn of the Golden Era



Written by Param Sant Kirpal Singh (R)
Dedicated to Huzur Baba Sawan Singh (L)

Part I-B.

Gurumat Siddhant

(Principles of the Path of Perfect Masters – Sant-Mat or Surat-Shabd Yoga)

An abridged Translation from the Gurumukhi / Punjabi:
'Gurmat Sidhant'

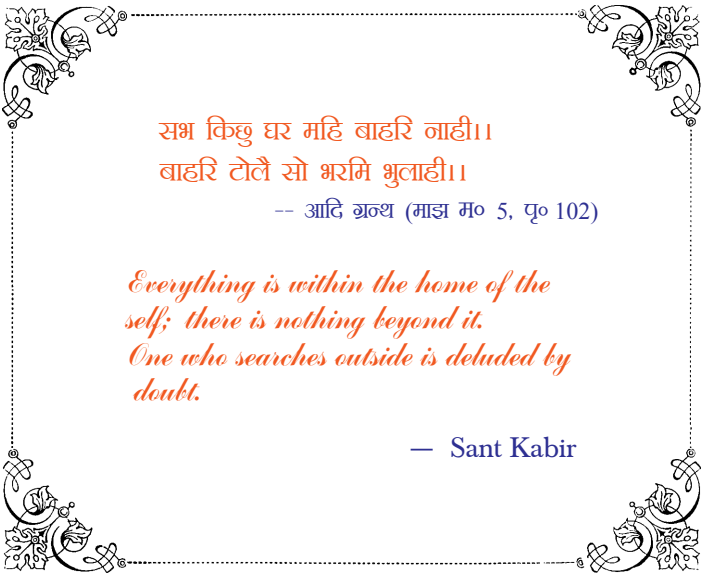


Sant Kirpal Singh Ji Maharaj




Dedicated
to the Almighty God
working through all Masters Who have come,
and Baba Sawan Singh Ji Maharaj,
at Whose Lotus Feet the writer
imbibed sweet elixir of
Holy Naam -- the Word.



सभ किछु घर महि बाहरि नाही।।
बाहरि टोलै सो भरमि भुलाही।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (माझ म० 5, पृ० 102)

Everything is within the home of the self; there is nothing beyond it.
One who searches outside is deluded by doubt.

— Sant Kabir

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DIVINE AMBROSIA

(*Hari-Ras* हरि–रस)

In Gurbani, the words '*Naam*' and '*Shabd*' have been used for *Hari*, the Lord. This has the power to make one immortal and has, therefore, been also called Nectar or Ambrosia. It has a very great intoxicating effect. Because of this enrapturing effect it has been described as *Hari-Ras* or Divine Ambrosia, by the *Gurus*.

In the Divine Ambrosia of the Name or *Naam*, there is the sweet Elixir of Life. This aspect has been explained in detail in Gurbani. It is also called the most excellent Ambrosia. One is advised to drink it, because the sense-pleasures are tasteless; the intoxication produced by them is not real. Sense-pleasures are related to the desires of the mind. We therefore fall, when we indulge in them. They do not result in any constant and lasting pleasure. The Ambrosia of the Name is the most excellent one, and unless we drink it, we drown in the ocean of worldly existence and our soul remains without the lasting bliss.

बिखै बनु फीका तिआगि री सखीऐ नामु महा रसु पीओ।।
बिनु रस चाखे बुडि गई सगली सुखी न होवत जीओ।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (बिलावल म० 5, पृ० 802)

Give up the love of the insipid water of evil, and drink in the Divine Ambrosia of the Lord's Name; for, because of not tasting it, myriads have been drowned, and one's soul is never in peace.

नानक नामु महा रसु मीठा गुरि पूरै सचु पाइआ।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (गउड़ी म० 1, पृ० 243)

Nanak, sweet is the essence of the Name; through the Perfect Guru, do I attain the Truth.

संता की बेनंती सुआमी नामु महा रसु दीजै राम।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (सूही म० 5, पृ० 784)

The prayer of the Sants is: O Lord bless us with the Supreme Sublime Ambrosia of Your Name.

What is *Hari-Ras*?

Divine Ambrosia is *Naam*. It is the Unstruck Music. To attain it, is to attain the Lord. Gurbani says that *Hari-Ras* or Divine Ambrosia is another name for *Naam* or *Shabd*. Those who are not recipients of this Ambrosia, are unfortunate and remain within the clutches of death.

जिन हरि हरि हरि रसु नामु न पाइआ ते भागहीण जम पासि।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (गूजरी म० 4, पृ० 10)

They who tasted not the Divine Ambrosia of Naam, they, the unfortunate ones, are handed over to the messengers of Death.

हरि कीए पतित पवित्र मिलि साध गुर हरि नामै हरि रसु चाखिबा।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (जैतसरी म० 4, पृ० 697)

The Lord redeems the sinners; He makes them meet the Master; they then taste the Divine Ambrosia.

अनहत बाणी गुर सबदि जाणी हरि नामु हरि रसु भोगो।।
कहै नानकु प्रभु आपि मिलिआ करण कारण जोगो।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (रामकली म० 3, पृ० 921)

Through the Guru's Word, you hear the Unstruck Music, and through the Lord's Name, enjoy the Divine Ambrosia. Says Nanak, this is how I met with my Lord, who is the Creator and the Cause.

हरि रसु चाखै तां सुधि होइ।। नानक नामि रते सचु सोइ।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (बसंत म० 3, पृ० 1174)

If you taste the Divine Ambrosia, you are purged of vice. If imbued with the Lord's Naam, ever-abiding is your glory.

- It is an Indescribable Story (*Akath Katha* अकथ कथा).

जिसहि जगाइ पीआवै इहु रसु अकथ कथा तिनि जानी।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (गउड़ी पूरबी म० 5, पृ० 13)

He who is awakened and made to drink this Ambrosia, he alone knows the Indescribable Story.

दीन दइआल होवहु जन ऊपरि जन देवहु अकथ कहानी।।
संत जना मिलि हरि रसु पाइआ हरि मनि तनि मीठ लगानी।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (सारंग म० 4, पृ० 1199)

O Lord, be merciful to me, the poor one, and bless me with the Unutterable Word. I am blessed with the Divine Ambrosia of Your Naam, by meeting with the Sants, and You seem sweet to my body and mind.

- It is Nectar.

सतिगुरु सेवि सफल हरि दरसनु मिलि अंमृतु हरि रसु पीअहु।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (बिलावल म० 4, पृ० 800)

In the service of the Master, you are blessed with the bliss-giving vision of the Lord, and meeting Him, you drink the Divine Ambrosia.

इहु हरि रसु पावै जनु कोइ।। अंमृतु पीवै अमरु सो होइ।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (गउड़ी सुखमनी म० 5, पृ० 287)

Rare is the one who gets this Ambrosia; he who drinks the Nectar becomes immortal.

Where is *Hari-Ras*?

The holy books, scriptures and the Vedas contain only praise of the Divine Ambrosia; they do not contain the Divine Ambrosia itself. This latter is within us. We can get it only by going within. Emerson has said, "Tap inside." This Divine Ambrosia pervades everywhere, but the eyes that can see it are opened, only when one goes inside. *Sant*s and sages advise us to go within. By studying the holy books, there dwells up within one a desire to obtain the Divine Ambrosia, but it is impossible to get it by mere reading.

वेदु पड़हि हरि रसु नही आइआ।। वादु वखाणहि मोहे माइआ।।
अगिआनमती सदा अंधिआरा गुरमुखि बूझि हरि गावणिआ।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (माझ म० 3, पृ० 128)

By reading the Vedas, the people taste not the Ambrosia. Lured away by Maya, they discourse on dissent; they who revel in

ignorance, are forever in the dark. Through the Guru alone, one knows and sings of the Lord.

- *Hari-Ras* is Everywhere.

Naam pervades all divisions and regions of the universe. Its essence also pervades everywhere. It fills all corners and places. But the unfortunate ones cannot find it.

इहु हरि रसु वणि तिणि सभतु है भागहीण नही खाइ।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (सिरीराग म० 4, पृ० 41)

The Divine Ambrosia is everywhere, but those, who are unfortunate ones, cannot find it.

- It is in the Third Eye.

चरन कमल बसे रिद अंतरि अंमृत हरि रसु चाखे।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (सोरठ म० 5, पृ० 616)

In his heart dwell the Lord's Lotus Feet, and he partakes of the Divine Ambrosia.

भ्रम का संगलु तोड़ि निराला हरि अंतरि हरि रसु पाइआ।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (मारू म० 1, पृ० 1041)

Break the chains of doubt, and remain unattached; you shall find the Lord, and Lord's Divine Ambrosia, deep within yourself.

- It is in the Tenth Door.

When the soul is withdrawn from the nine doors and enters the Tenth Door behind the eyes, it tastes the Ambrosia.

काइआ नगरु नगरु है नीको विचि सउदा हरि रसु कीजै।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (कलिआन म० 4, पृ० 1323)

Beauteous is the township of the body, in which the merchandise of the Lord's Divine Ambrosia is traded.

नउ दरवाज नवे दर फीके रसु अंमृतु दसवे चुईजै।।

कृपा कृपा किरपा करि पिआरे गुर सबदी हरि रसु पीजै।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (कलिआन म० 4, पृ० 1323)

The body has nine doors; insipid are their tastes; and it is in the Tenth, that drops the Nectar. O God, be merciful that we may drink the Divine Ambrosia through the Guru's Word.

How can *Hari-Ras* be obtained?

- Through the Grace of the Lord.

The Lord is Himself the Nectar, and He is also the Divine Ambrosia. He Himself alone can make one intoxicated with it. He alone receives it, to whom the Lord gives it.

आपे अंमृतु आपि है पिआरा आपे ही रसु आपै।।
आपे आपि सलाहदा पिआरा जन नानक हरि रसि ध्रापै।।
-- आदि ग्रन्थ (सोरठ म० 4, पृ० 605)

He Himself is the Nectar; He Himself is the Beloved. He Himself is the Ambrosia; He Himself sings its praise. O Nanak, He showers Ambrosia, and the devotee's thirst is quenched.

कहु नानक जिसु मसतकि लिखिआ तिसु गुर मिलि रोग बिदारी।।
-- आदि ग्रन्थ (सोरठ म० 5, पृ० 616)

Says Nanak, one who has such pre-ordained destiney inscribed upon his forehead, meets with the Guru, and all his diseases are cured.

He alone gets the Divine Ambrosia, to whom the Lord is merciful. However, the Lord is uninfluenced, and gives it to whomsoever He pleases.

नदरि करे ता हरि रसु पावै।। नानक हरि रसि हरि गुण गावै।।
-- आदि ग्रन्थ (सूही म० 4, पृ० 733)

When the Lord showers His Grace, one is blessed with the Divine Ambrosia; and then O Nanak, one sings the praises of the Lord, and drinks the Divine Ambrosia.

कृपा करहि ता हरि गुण गावह हरि रसु अंतरि पाई।।
-- आदि ग्रन्थ (सोरठ म० 4, पृ० 607)

O Lord, bless me with Your mercy, that I may sing the praises of Your Naam, and find the Divine Ambrosia in the heart.

सदा हरि रसु पाए जा हरि भाए रसना सबदि सुहाए।।
नामु धिआए सदा सुखु पाए नामि रहै लिव लाए।।
-- आदि ग्रन्थ (गउड़ी म० 3, पृ० 246)

When the Lord so wills it, you will receive the Divine Ambrosia, and on your tongue will be the beauteous Word. You will dwell on the Lord's Name, and be ever in peace, and be attuned to Naam.

- By great Good Fortune.

गुरमुखि हरि रसु चाखै कोइ।।
तिसु सदा अनंदु होवै दिनु राती पूरै भागि परापति होइ।।
-- आदि ग्रन्थ (धनासरी म० 3, पृ० 664)

A true devotee tastes the Divine Ambrosia and is in bliss day and night. He gets it by good fortune.

हरि रस भोग महा निरजोग वडभागी हरि रसु पाइआ।।
-- आदि ग्रन्थ (आसा म० 4, पृ० 445)

They taste the Divine Ambrosia and remain detached. Through good destiny, they get to taste it.

हरि हरि रसु पाइआ गुरमति हरि धिआइआ धुरि मसतकि भाग पुरान जीउ।।
-- आदि ग्रन्थ (आसा म० 4, पृ० 446)

He gathers the Divine Ambrosia and through the Guru's Word, he dwells on the Lord's Name. Thus is fulfilled the Eternal Writ.

- From a Perfect Master.

He to whom the Lord is kind, meets a Perfect Master and obtains from Him the Divine Ambrosia. By the Ambrosia of the Name, the soul of a disciple becomes fragrant and enraptured. It forgets all the tasteless pursuits of the world and becomes absorbed in the Music of the Name.

एहु हरि रसु करमी पाईऐ सतिगुरु मिलै जिसु आइ।।
कहै नानकु होरि अन रस सभि वीसरे जा हरि वसै मनि आइ।।
-- आदि ग्रन्थ (रामकली म० 3, पृ० 921)

One gets the Divine Ambrosia through His Grace, when one meets a Perfect Master. O Nanak, all other tasteless pleasures are forgotten, when the Lord dwells in the heart.

सतिगुरु मिलै वडभागि संजोग।। हिरदै नामु नित हरि रस भोग।।
-- आदि ग्रन्थ (गउड़ी गुआरेरी म० 3, पृ० 162)

Fortunate is the one, who meets the Master; in his heart is Naam; and he enjoys the Divine Ambrosia.

सतिगुर नामु दृढ़ाए अति मीठा मैलागरु मलगारे।।
नामै सुरति वजी है दह दिसि हरि मुसकी मुसक गंधारे।।
-- आदि ग्रन्थ (नट म० 4, पृ० 981)

O Master! Enshrine within me the sweet Naam of the Lord, which is cool and fragrant like the sandalwood. Naam has wholly illumined my mind and the gaze of my soul sees all.

हरि कितु बिधि पाईऐ संत जनहु जिसु देखि हउ जीवा।।
हरि बिनु चसा न जीवती गुर मेलिहु हरि रसु पीवा।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (गउड़ी बैरागनि म० 3, पृ० 163)

How to find the Lord, O Sants, by seeing whom, I become alive? I cannot live for a moment without Him. Unite me with the Master, that I may taste the Divine Ambrosia.

भाउ भोजनु सतिगुरि तुठै पाए।। अन रसु चूकै हरि रसु मंनि वसाए।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (माझ म० 3, पृ० 115)

Through the Mercy of the Master, one receives the food of Love; then one loses the taste for everything else and enshrines the Divine Ambrosia in his heart.

हरि का नामु मीठा पिरा जीउ जा चाखहि चितु लाए।।
रसना हरि रसु चाखु मुये जीउ अन रस साद गवाए।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (गउड़ी म० 3, पृ० 246)

Sweet is the Name of the Lord, O dear one; taste it with your whole mind; taste the Divine Ambrosia, forsaking all other tastes.

- By the Grace of the Master.

गुर किरपा ते हरि रसु पाए।। नानक नामि रते गति पाए।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (आसा म० 3, पृ० 361)

The Ambrosia is obtained by the Master's Grace, O Nanak, one gets release by contemplating on the Name.

जिस नो कृपा करे सो धिआवै।। नित हरि जपु जापै जपि हरि सुखु पावै।।
गुर परसादी हरि रसु आवै जपि हरि हरि पारि लंघाई जीउ।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (मारू म० 4, पृ० 998)

He alone meditates on the Lord, unto whom He grants His Grace. He continually chants the Lord's Chant; meditating on the Lord, one finds peace. By Guru's Grace, the Divine Ambrosia of the Lord is obtained. Meditating on the Lord, Hari, Hari, one is carried across.

- By Keeping the Company of *Sant*s and Listening to their Discourses.

साधसंगि मिलि हरि रसु पाइआ।। कहु नानक सफल ओह काइआ।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (आसा म० 5, पृ० 374)

The Ambrosia is obtained in the Company of the Sants. O Nanak, blessed is the body of such a one.

साधसंगति महि हरि रसु पाईऐ गुरि मिलिऐ जम भउ भागा।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (सोरठ म० 1, पृ० 598)

In the company of the Sants, one gathers the Divine Ambrosia, and meeting with the Master, the fear of death departs.

सतसंगति मिलै वडभागि ता हरि रसु आवए जीउ।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (धनासरी म० 4, पृ० 690)

If one is blessed with the True Congregation of the Sants, by great good fortune, one tastes the Divine Ambrosia.

मिलि संगति हरि रंग पाइआ जन नानक मनि तनि रङु।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (सूही म० 4, पृ० 732)

Joining the Sangat, slave Nanak has obtained the Divine Ambrosia; my mind and body are drenched in it.

- By Submitting to His Law.

गुरमुखि होवै सु भाणा मंने सहजे हरि रसु पीजै।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (सारंग की वार म० 3, पृ० 1246)

One who becomes Gurumukh, accepts God's Will; he intuitively drinks in the Lord's Divine Ambrosia.

Who obtains *Hari-Ras*?

It is only rare devotees, who long for their Master, that are blessed with the Divine Ambrosia. Egotistical persons do not obtain it.

ऐसो रे हरि रसु मीठा। गुरमुखि किनै विरलै डीठा।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (रामकली म० 5, पृ० 886)

So sweet is the Divine Ambrosia! But rare is the one who tastes it, by the Guru's Grace.

गुरमुखि हरि रसु चाखै कोइ।।
तिसु सदा अनंदु होवै दिनु राती पूरै भागि परापति होइ।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (धनासरी म० 3, पृ० 664)

Rare is the one who by the Guru's Grace, tastes the Divine Ambrosia, and remains in bliss day and night. But it is only through Perfect Destiny that one attains the Name.

पंखी पंच उडरि नही धावहि।। सफलिओ बिरखु अंमृत फलु पावहि।।
गुरमुखि सहजि रवै गुण गावै हरि रसु चोग चुगाइदा।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (मारू सोलहे म० 1, पृ० 1033)

The five birds then fly not out (after Ambrosia is tasted), and the tree is fruitful, yielding the fruit of Nectar. The Lord's devotees contemplate in utter poise and sing the praises of the Lord. He feeds the birds with Divine Ambrosia.

साकत हरि रस सादु न जाणिआ तिन अंतरि हउमै कंडा हे।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (गउड़ी पूरबी म० 4, पृ० 13)

Egotistical persons do not enjoy the taste of the Divine Ambrosia, for in their hearts is the thorn of selfhood.

साकत मुठे दुरमती हरि रसु न जाणंन्हि।।
जिन्ही अंमृतु भरमि लुटाइआ बिखु सिउ रचहि रचंन्हि।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (बिलावल की वार म० 3, पृ० 854)

Evil are the ways of the egotistic; they know not the Divine Ambrosia. They get no Nectar, because of their doubts; they love the poison in their hearts.

मनमुखि हरि रसु चाखिआ न जाइ।। हउमै करै बहुती मिलै सजाइ।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (सूही म० 4, पृ० 733)

The egocentric tastes not the Divine Ambrosia; he acts in ego and he suffers terrible punishment.

Qualities of *Hari-Ras.*

To those who have tasted the Divine Ambrosia, other things are utterly tasteless. They are fascinated by its wonderful taste.

रूप सुंदरीआ अनिक इसतरीआ।। हरि रस बिनु सभि सुआद फिकरीआ।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (आसा म० 5, पृ० 385)

One may have many women of exquisite charm and beauty, but compared with the Divine Ambrosia, insipid are all other tastes.

हरि रसु जन चाखहु जे भाई।। तउ कत अनत सादि लोभाई।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (सूही म० 4, पृ० 733)

O brother devotee, if you were to taste the Divine Ambrosia, you would never love any other taste.

जा कउ रसु हरि रसु है आइओ।। सो अन रस नाही लपटाइओ।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (गउड़ी म० 5, पृ० 186)

He who has tasted the bliss of the Lord, hankers not after the insipid tastes (of the world).

हरि रस का तूं चाखहि सादु।। चाखत होइ रहहि बिसमादु।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (गउड़ी गुआरेरी म० 5, पृ० 180)

If you have tasted the Divine Ambrosia, you are held spellbound by its wonder.

To God-inclined persons, the Divine Ambrosia is the greatest and the most invaluable wealth.

बसुधा सपत दीप है सागर कढि कंचनु काढि धरीजै।।

मेरे ठाकुर के जन इनहु न बाछहि हरि मागहि हरि रसु दीजै।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (कलिआन म० 4, पृ० 1323)

There are seven lands and oceans; you may drain them of their wealth; but the devotees desire them not; they ask for the Divine Ambrosia.

The *Rishi*s, *Muni*s (sages), *Sankadik* (mythological eternally young gods) and other holy men, including Shukdev and Prahlad, in ancient times reached wonderful states after partaking of the Divine Ambrosia.

सनकादिक ब्रहमादिक गावत गावत सुक प्रहिलाद।।

पीवत अमिउ मनोहर हरि रसु जपि नानक हरि बिसमाद।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (सारंग म० 5, पृ० 1224)

The Sankadik and Brahmadik sing Your praise, Shukdev and Prahlad sing Your praise too. Whosoever drinks the wonderful Ambrosia, O Nanak, he is awake to the wonders of God.

Fruits of *Hari-Ras.*

In the Ocean of *Naam*, are the rising and falling waves of the Divine Ambrosia. When one hears within himself the Melody of *Naam*, one is spellbound. He remains in ecstasy and intoxication day and night, and all the wealth of the world appears valueless in comparison. This intoxication is referred to as 'Wine' by Muslim Saints.

हरि रसु पीवत सद ही राता।। आन रसा खिन महि लहि जाता।।
हरि रस के माते मनि सदा अनंद।। आन रसा महि विआपै चिंद।।
हरि रसु पीवै अलमसतु मतवारा।। आन रसा सभि होछे रे।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (आसा म० 5, पृ० 377)

He is ever intoxicated, who drinks the Ambrosia. Other drinks intoxicate, but their effect soon wears off. The God-intoxicated person drinks Ambrosia; for him, all other drinks become insipid. One who drinks in the Lord's sublime essence, is intoxicated and entraptured; All other essences have no effect.

माई री मनु मेरो मतवारो।।
पेखि दइआल अनद सुख पूरन हरि रसि रपिओ खुमारो।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (सारंग म० 5, पृ० 1225)

O my mother, my mind is intoxicated with God; seeing my compassionate Lord, I am in utter bliss; the Divine Ambrosia intoxicates me completely.

It is the Master who grants this intoxication. Hafiz Sahib and others have, therefore, called Him '*Saqi*', the Wine-server or Cupbearer. The Perfect Master gives his disciples the cup of this Ambrosia to drink and thus frees them from the bondage of the world. Hafiz Sahib asked for this Ambrosial Wine, saying,

बदिह साक़ी मए बाक़ी कि दर जन्नत न–ख़्वाही याफ़्त।

-- दीवाने-हाफ़िज़ (पृ० 30)

O Cupbearer, give me that wine, which is not to be found even in heaven.

Bhai Nand Lal also prayed for this Wine, saying,

बदिह साक़ी मरा यक़ जामे–जाँ रंगीनिए दिलहा।
ब–चश्मे–पाक बीं आसां कुनम ईं जुमला मुश्किलहा।

-- कुल्लियाते-नन्दलाल गोया (ग़ज़ल 3, पृ० 50)

O Cupbearer, give me a drink, a drink that will intoxicate. O Server, give me a drink which will solve every difficulty.

Gurbani mentions many of the benefits of the Divine Ambrosia: All perversions and egotism are destroyed. The mind is purified. Happiness and peace are gained. The intellect is sharpened and the lotus of the heart is turned upwards. The result is that one enjoys equipoise, crosses the ocean of existence and attains deliverance. He becomes immortal and is honoured in the Court of the Lord. He dwells in his Pristine Home and meets the Lord.

Gurbani also outlines the unfortunate consequences of not drinking the Divine Ambrosia.

Spiritual seekers should obtain this Ambrosia and thus make their lives fruitful. Gurbani urges us to obtain this Ambrosia.

ऐसा हरि रसु रमहु सभु कोइ।। सरब कला पूरन प्रभु सोइ।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (गउड़ी म० 5, पृ० 196)

Everyone should dwell on the Sweet Ambrosia of the Lord. God is replete with all-power.

Guru-Naam गुरु–नाम **or** *Gurumukh-Naam* गुरुमुख–नाम.

Naam is obtained through the Master by following His instructions. Only a devotee can obtain it. *Naam* has also been described as *Gurumat-Naam*, *Guru-Naam* or *Gurumukh-Naam*. According to Gurbani, *Gurumat-Naam*, *Guru-Naam* and *Gurumukh-Naam* are the same as the hidden *Naam* or *Dhunatmak Naam*, Unstruck Music or Unutterable Sound.

Gurumat-Naam गुरुमत–नाम.

By *Gurumat* is meant *Shabd*, Divine Sound or *Anahad Dhun* अनहद धुन (Ceaseless Music). It is indeed the True *Naam*.

गुरुमति नामु न वीसरै सहजे पति पाईऐ।।
अंतरि सबदु निधानु है मिलि आपु गवाईऐ।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (गउड़ी बैरागनि म० 1, पृ० 228)

Follow the Guru's Teachings, and do not forget Naam, the Name of the Lord; you shall then automatically obtain honour. Deep within the self, is the Treasure of Shabd; it is obtained only by eradicating the ego.

ऐसे प्रेम भगति वीचारी।। गुरमुखि साचा नामु मुरारी।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (आसा म० 1, पृ० 414)

Such is the loving devotional worship of the Lord's contemplation that the Gurumukh realises the True Name, the Destroyer of Ego.

त्राहि त्राहि सरनि प्रभ आए मोकउ गुरमति नामु दृड़ीजै।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (कलिआन म० 4, पृ० 1325)

Save me, save me, O Lord; I take refuge with You; make my faith in the Gurumat-Naam firm and strong.

It is through the Grace of the Lord and through great good fortune, that one gets the *Guru-Naam* or *Gurumat-Naam*.

प्राणी गुरमुखि नामु धिआई।।
हरि हरि कृपा करे गुरु मेले हरि हरि नामि समाई।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (मलार म० 4, पृ० 1265)

One contemplates on the Gurumukh-Naam; with the Lord's Grace one meets a Master; by His Grace, one merges with the Lord.

जे वड भागु होइ अति नीका तां गुरमति नामु दृड़ीजै।।
सभु माइआ मोहु बिखमु जगु तरीऐ सहजे हरि रसु पीजै।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (कलिआन म० 4, पृ० 1326)

If a person is very fortunate, he is attuned to the Gurumat-Naam. He then crosses the ocean of Maya and attachment, and tastes the Divine Ambrosia.

Gurumukh-Naam can be had from the Master only, and it is only the devotee who can have it.

विणु गुर पूरे कोइ न जाणी।। माइआ मोहि दूजै लोभाणी।।
गुरमुखि नामु मिलै हरि बाणी।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (आसा म० 3, पृ० 423)

No one save the Perfect Master knows; Maya and worldly attachment delude all others. It is through the Guru that one is blessed with the Lord's Word.

पाप पुंन वरतै संसारा।। हरखु सोगु सभु दुखु है भारा।।
गुरमुखि होवै सो सुखु पाए जिनि गुरमुखि नामु पछाता हे।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (मारू म० 3, पृ० 1052)

The world is involved with virtue and vice, and with pleasure and pain which lead to sorrow. Only a devotee lives in bliss; he realises the Gurumukh-Naam.

Benefits of *Guru-Naam.*

Gurbani mentions various benefits of *Guru-Naam*. These are as follows:

- All Desires are Fulfilled and Happiness is Obtained.

अनदिनु जपउ गुरु गुर नाम।। ताते सिधि भए सगल काम।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (गउड़ी म० 5, पृ० 202)

Night and day, I mediatate on the Guru, and the Name of the Guru. Thereby, all my works are brought to perfection.

सरब सुखा का एकु हरि सुआमी सो गुरि नामु दइओ।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (बिलावल भगत कबीर, पृ० 856)

O mother! the One Lord and Master, is the source of all happiness. The Guru has blessed me with His Name.

- Sins, Perversions and Egotism are Destroyed.

सभ किलविख पाप दुख कटिआ मेरी जिंदुड़ीए मलु गुरमुखि नामि उतारे राम।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (बिहागड़ा म० 4, पृ० 539)

All your sins and sorrows are destroyed; all your dirt is cleansed by the Guru through Naam.

अहंबुधि बहु सघन माइआ महा दीरघ रोगु।।
हरि नामु अउखधु गुरि नामु दीनो करण कारण जोगु।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (गूजरी म० 5, पृ० 502)

Intellectual egotism and love for Maya are the most serious chronic diseases. The Lord's Name is the medicine, which is the potent cure for them. The Guru has given me Naam, the Name of the Lord.

आपि अतीतु अलिपतु है निरजोगु हरि जोगी।।
जो तिसु भावै सो करे हरि करे सु होगी।।
हरि गुरमुखि नामु धिआईऐ लहि जाहि विजोगी।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (गूजरी की वार म० 3, पृ० 514)

He is detached: attached yet separate. He does what He likes; all that He wills comes to pass. When one dwells on the Lord's Name by Guru's Grace, one's separation from the Lord vanishes.

- It gives Equipoise to Life.

गुरमुखि नामु परापति होवै।। सहजै जागै सहजे सोवै।।
गुरमुखि नामि समाइ समावै नानक नामु धिआई हे।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (मारू म० 4, पृ० 1069)

When one obtains the Gurumukh-Naam, one sleeps in poise and also wakes in poise, and one is merged in the Gurumukh-Naam. O Nanak, one contemplates on the True Naam.

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NECTAR
(Amrit अमृत)

That thing is called *Amrit* (Nectar), *Aab-e-Hayat* (Elixir of Life), or *Maha-Ras* महा–रस (Divine Ambrosia), the partaking of which, makes one immortal, and frees one from birth and death.

To obtain it, many ascetics have carried out severe penances and have undergone untold privations. They sought for it in sacred places, mountains, forests, rivers, rivulets and lakes.

But they failed to find such a spiritual life-force anywhere. In fact, this wonderful Nectar cannot be found in the gross world. The botanist and other scientists have not discovered it and have given up the search.

This Nectar is mentioned in the scriptures of all religions. Muslim Saints have called it *Aab-e-Hewan* or *Aab-e-Hayat* (Water or Elixir of Life). They have sung the praises of drinking it.

According to the Hindu *Rishi*s, *Mansarovar* is a Pool of Nectar, by drinking which, one becomes immortal. In the Vedas, at many places a mention is made of *Soma-Ras* सोम–रस, by drinking which the *Rishi*s used to become immortal. *Sant*s call this *Mansarovar* मानसरोवर – the Sacred Pool or *Chashma-e-Kausar* चश्मा–ए–क़ौसर – Spring of Immortality, *Amritsar* अमृतसर – Pool of Nectar. It is said in the Bible that Christ rose up from the dead and brought the dead back to life. He also promised to give the Water of Life to a certain woman. This shows that he had the use of the Divine Nectar. Guru Nanak, his successors and other *Sant*s drank deeply of this Nectar themselves, and also gave it to their disciples.

What is *Amrit*?

We should ponder over the nature of Nectar. What is the Nectar referred to by the *Guru*s? Gurbani mentions it. On considering the matter, it becomes clear that they have called *Shabd* or *Naam*, the Name, the Divine Nectar. They have advised their devotees to drink of it.

अंमृतु साचा नामु है कहणा कछू न जाइ।।
पीवत हू परवाणु भइआ पूरै सबदि समाइ।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (सिरीराग म० 3, पृ० 33)

The Nectar is the True Name; It cannot be described. Drinking It in, one becomes honourable, absorbed completely in Shabd.

अंमृतु हरि हरि नामु है मेरी जिंदुड़ीए अंमृतु गुरमति पाए राम।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (बिहागड़ा म० 4, पृ० 538)

The Name of the Lord, Hari, Hari, is Ambrosial Nectar, O my soul; through the Guru's Teachings, this Nectar is obtained.

हरि का नामु अंमृत जलु निरमलु इहु अउखधु जगि सारा।।
गुर परसादि कहै जनु भीखनु पावउ मोख दुआरा।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (सोरठ भगत भीखन, पृ० 659)

The Lord's immaculate Nectar-Name is the cure-all for all the maladies of the world. Says Bhikhan, by the Guru's Grace, I have found the Door of Deliverance. (Bhagat Bhikhan)

अंमृतु हरि का नाउ देवै दीखिआ।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (सूही म० 1, पृ० 729)

The Guru blesses with the Nectar-Name of the Lord.

अंमृतु हरि का नामु है जितु पीतै तिख जाइ।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (मलार की वार म० 3, पृ० 1283)

The Name of the Lord is Ambrosial Nectar; drinking It, thirst is quenched.

हरि का नामु अंमृतु कलि माहि।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (रामकली म० 5, पृ० 888)

The Name of the Lord is Ambrosial Nectar in the dark age of Kali yuga.

अंमृतु नामु निधानु है मिलि पीवहु भाई।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (गउड़ी की वार म० 5, पृ० 318)

The Treasure of Naam, the Name of the Lord, is Ambrosial Nectar; and drink it in, O Siblings of the Destiny.

गुर का सबदु महा रसु मीठा।। ऐसा अंमृतु अंतरि डीठा।।
जिनि चाखिआ पूरा पदु होइ।। नानक ध्रापिओ तनि सुखु होइ।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (प्रभाती म० 1, पृ० 1331)

The Guru's Shabd is utterly sweet and sublime. Such is the Amrosial Nectar I see deep within. Those who taste This, attain the state of perfection. O Nanak; they are satisfied, and their bodies are comforted.

गुर का सबदु अंमृतु है जितु पीतै तिख जाइ।।
इहु मनु साचा सचि रता सचे रहिआ समाइ।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (सिरीराग म० 3, पृ० 35)

The Guru's Shabd is Ambrosial Nectar; drinking it in, thirst is quenched. The mind is attuned to Truth, and it remains merged with the True One.

अंमृतु एको सबदु है नानक गुरमुखि पाइआ।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (सोरठ की वार म० 3, पृ० 644)

Nanak, the Word is the only Nectar, and through the Guru, It is received.

डूगरि वासु तिखा घणी जब देखा नही दूरि।।
तिखा निवारी सबदु मंनि अंमृतु पीआ भरपूरि।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (रामकली म० 1, पृ० 933)

When I lived on the mountain of ego, intense were my sensuous cravings. But when I saw I was so near the Lord's presence, I accepted the Word, and stilled my thirst; I filled my soul with the Lord's Nectar.

The term 'Nectar' has also been used to describe the Truth and the Unending Music.

अंमृतु नामु निधानु सचु गुरमुखि पाइआ जाइ।।
वडभागी ते संत जन जिन मनि वुठा आइ।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (रामकली म० 5, पृ० 961)

The Nectar is the treasure of the Name; a devotee finds it. Fortunate are the devotees, in whose heart It dwells.

अंमृतु वरखै अनहद बाणी।। मन तन अंतरि सांति समाणी।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (माझ म० 5, पृ० 105)

Ambrosial Nectar, the Unstruck Melody, rains down continually; peace and tranquillity fill my mind and body.

The Nectar has also been called *Hari* हरि (the Lord), *Hari-Kirtan* हरि–कीर्तन (singing praises of the Lord) and also the Supreme Ambrosia.

साखा तीनि निवारीआ एक सबदि लिव लाइ।।
अंमृत फलु हरि एकु है आपे देइ खवाइ।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (सिरीराग म० 3, पृ० 66)

Give up the three attributes of this world, and merge in Shabd. The Lord and the immortal fruit are one; the Lord Himself makes one eat it.

बिखिआ रंग कूड़ाविआ दिसनि सभे छारु।।
हरि अंमृत बूंद सुहावणी मिलि साधू पीवणहारु।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (माझ म० 5, पृ० 134)

False are the colours of Maya; all that is apparent turns to ashes. Sweet as nectar is the Lord, go into the company of Sants and drink the Nectar.

हरि अंमृतु हरि जलु पाइआ सभ लाथी तिस तिस के।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (सूही म० 4, पृ० 731)

I am blessed with the Nectar of the Lord, which has quenched all my thirst.

हरि हरि नामु अंमृतु है हरि जपीऐ सतिगुर भाइ।।
हरि हरि नामु पवितु है हरि जपत सुनत दुखु जाइ।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (कानड़ा की वार म० 4, पृ० 1316)

Nectar-sweet is the Lord's Name, it is through the Guru, that one dwells upon it. Purifying is the Lord's Name, and contemplating on it, one is rid of one's pain.

अंमृत रसु हरि कीरतनो को विरला पीवै।।
वजहु नानक मिलै एकु नामु रिद जपि जपि जीवै।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (आसा म० 5, पृ० 400)

The Lord's praise is Nectar-sweet, but rare is the one who tastes it. Nanak is rewarded with the One Name, and contemplating on It, he lives.

हउ वारी जीउ वारी अंमृत नामु मंनि वसावणिआ।।
अंमृत नामु महा रसु मीठा गुरमती अंमृतु पीआवणिआ।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (माझ म० 3, पृ० 124)

I am a sacrifice to those who enshrine Ambrosial Naam, the Name of the Lord, within their minds. Ambrosial Naam is very sweet! Through the Guru's teachings, one drinks in this Ambrosial Nectar.

Gurbani tells us that this Nectar is unique, and that it is the only True Nectar. It is *Naam* of the Lord. There is no other Nectar. By drinking it, one is dyed in its colour.

जिन वडिआई तेरे नाम की ते रते मन माहि।।
नानक अंमृतु एकु है दूजा अंमृतु नाहि।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (सारंग की वार म० 2, पृ० 1238)

They, who are blessed with the Glory of Naam, their mind is imbued with Your Love. O Nanak! There is only One Nectar; no, there is none other at all.

In the Iron Age, the Name of the Lord is the only Nectar.

हरि का नामु अंमृतु कलि माहि।। एहु निधाना साधू पाहि।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (रामकली म० 5, पृ० 888)

The Name of the Lord is Ambrosial Nectar in this dark age of Kali yuga. This treasure is obtained from the Sants.

In *Amrit,* there is the Sound Principle.

There is a sweet Melody and Unending Music in the Nectar and this supports the entire universe. The Nectar is the Bread of Life, the food of the soul.

धावतु थंम्हिआ सतिगुरि मिलिऐ दसवा दुआरु पाइआ।।
तिथै अंमृत भोजनु सहज धुनि उपजै जितु सबदि जगतु थंम्हि रहाइआ।।
तह अनेक वाजे सदा अनदु है सचे रहिआ समाए।।
इउ कहै नानकु सतिगुरि मिलिऐ धावतु थंम्हिआ निज घरि वसिआ आए।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (आसा म० 3, पृ० 441)

The mind strays and wanders; on meeting the Master it is stilled; one then enters the tenth door; there Ambrosia is the food, and the Melody of Shabd resounds, which supports the entire universe. The Unending Music plays there; and one merges in the Truth. O Nanak, on meeting the Master the wandering mind is stilled, and one dwells in the Eternal Abode.

साधु मिलै साधू जनै संतोखु वसै गुर भाइ।।
अकथ कथा वीचारीऐ जे सतिगुर माहि समाइ।।
पी अंमृतु संतोखिआ दरगहि पैधा जाइ।।
घटि घटि वाजै किंगुरी अनदिनु सबदि सुभाइ।।
विरले कउ सोझी पई गुरमुखि मनु समझाइ।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (सिरीराग म० 1, पृ० 62)

When a Sant meets a Sant, contentment reigns supreme. The Unutterable Truth is dwelt upon if one merges in the Perfect Master. One drinks Nectar and is contented; one is honoured in the Court of the Lord. In all hearts rings the Music of the Lord's Flute; and one loves Shabd day and night. Only the few, who become Gurumukh, understand this by instructing their minds.

There is Light in *Amrit.*

The power of inner sight is located behind the eyes. If one turns one's attention towards the inner sky and makes it still there, Light appears. In the beginning, one sees flashes of lightning, a starry sky, sun, moon and several other kinds of Lights. When the soul crosses these regions and reaches *Trikuti* त्रिकुटी and *Paar-Brahm* पार ब्रह्म, it sees the sun and moon of the regions of *Brahm* and *Paar-Brahm* respectively.

Tulsi Sahib and other *Sant*s have mentioned these Lights in their writings.

हरि अंमृत कथा सरेसट ऊतम गुर बचनी सहजे चाखी।।
तह भइआ प्रगासु मिटिआ अंधिआरा जिउ सूरज रैणि किराखी।।
अदिसटु अगोचरु अलखु निरंजनु सो देखिआ गुरमुखि आखी।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (सिरीराग की वार म० 3, पृ० 87)

The Lord's Gospel is Nectar-sweet and glorious, and one tastes It through the Guru, in the natural way. One's mind is illumined and dispelled is one's darkness, as is the night ended by the rising sun. Becoming Gurumukh, one beholds with one's eyes the Unseen, Imperceptible, Unknowable, Immaculate Lord.

अंमृत बाणी गुर की मीठी।। गुरमुखि विरलै किनै चखि डीठी।।
अंतरि परगासु महा रसु पीवै दरि सचै सबदु वजावणिआ।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (माझ म० 3, पृ० 113)

Nectar-sweet is the Guru's Word, but rare is the one who tastes It. Into him comes Light, and he drinks the Ambrosia; and he hears the Melody at the Door of the Lord.

निरमल जोति अंमृतु हरि नाम।। पीवत अमर भए निहकाम।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (रामकली म० 5, पृ० 886)

Pure is His Light, Nectar-sweet is the Lord's Naam; and whosoever partakes of it, becomes immortal and desireless.

Where is *Amrit*?

- It is Found Within the Body.

The Nectar or the Elixir of Life is not to be found in the outer world. It can be found in the inner or spiritual regions only. By drinking it, one becomes immortal. In order to drink it, one has to go within one's body. What do the *Sant*s mean, when they talk of going within, where the Nectar is found?

This body is the home of the soul. There are windows and doors in it, through which the soul wanders out into the outer world. It is, however, imprisoned within the body. Nine doors of the body, namely the two eyes, the two ears, the two nostrils, one mouth and the two lower apertures are visible.

So long as the soul is busy in these nine doors, it remains without the Nectar. Besides these nine doors, however, there is another one, a secret door, behind the eyes. When the soul, after leaving the nine doors or withdrawing from them, is concentrated at the tenth door, it then drinks the precious Nectar.

नउ घर देखि जु कामनि भूली बसतु अनूप न पाई।।
कहतु कबीर नवै घर मूसे दसवैं ततु समाई।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (गउड़ी भगत कबीर, पृ० 339)

Seeing the nine openings of the body, the soul-bride is led astray, She fails to obtain that incomparable thing. Says Kabir, the nine openings of the body are being plundered; rise up to the Tenth Gate, and discover the True Essence.

नउ दरवाजे नवे दर फीके रसु अंमृतु दसवे चुईजै।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (कलिआन म० 4, पृ० 1323)

The body has nine doors, insipid are the tastes of their pleasures; it is in the Tenth Door that one gathers the Lord's Nectar.

अंमृत रसु सतिगुरू चुआइआ।। दसवै दुआरि प्रगटु होई आइआ।।
तह अनहद सबद वजहि धुनि बाणी सहजे सहजि समाई हे।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (मारू म० 4, पृ० 1069)

Through the True Guru, the Nectar drops into one's mind, and the Lord becomes manifest in the Tenth Door. There rings the ceaseless Melody of Shabd, and one merges in equipoise very easily.

बाहरि ढूढन ते छूटि परे गुरि घर ही माहि दिखाइआ था।।....
अनहद सबदु दसम दुआरि वजिओ तह अंमृत नामु चुआइआ था।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (मारू म० 5, पृ० 1002)

I gave up searching for Him without; for the Guru has revealed Him in my own house; the Unending Music plays at the Tenth Door; there I am fed with the Nectar of Naam.

The Nectar is obtained by going within the human body. There it yields its Nine Treasures. It simply cannot be found by means of any external observances.

नउ निधि अंमृतु प्रभ का नामु।। देही महि इस का बिस्रामु।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (गउड़ी सुखमनी म० 1, पृ० 293)

The Nine Treasures are in the Ambrosial Name of God. Within the human body is its place of rest.

Every heart is overflowing with this Nectar. Not one is without it.

जेते घट अंमृतु सभ ही महि भावै तिसहि पीआई।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (केदारा भगत कबीर, पृ० 1123)

As many hearts as there are – in all of them, is His Ambrosial Nectar; as He pleases, He makes them to drink It in. (Kabir)

The Lake of Nectar is in all hearts. But it can be drunk through *Shabd* only.

अंतरि खूहटा अंमृति भरिआ सबदे काढि पीऐ पनिहारी।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (वडहंस म० 3, पृ० 570)

Within is the well full of Nectar; through the Word does one draw It out, and drink it.

This Nectar is inside of man himself, but the world seeks it outside. It is like the musk, which is in the navel of a deer, but the deer searches for it outside in the forests and does not find it.

घर ही महि अंमृतु भरपूरु है मनमुखा सादु न पाइआ।।
जिउ कसतूरी मिरगु न जाणै भ्रमदा भरमि भुलाइआ।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (सोरठ की वार म० 3, पृ० 644)

The Nectar fills the house; but the self-willed manmukhs know not its taste, as the deer knows not the musk within; and wanders about in delusion.

A Sufi says,

यार दर खाना ओ मन गिर्दे–जहाँ मीगरदम,
आब दर कूज़ा ओ मन तश्ना लबाँ मीगरदम।

Our Friend is in the house (our body) while we ceaselessly search for Him outside. The Nectar-water is full to the brim in the pitcher of the inner sky, but we wander about in thirst.

My Friend is in the house, but I am wandering in the world. The vessel is brimful with water; but I am wandering about athirst.

There is an inverted well in the sky (the top of the head) and its mouth opens towards the *Kanj–kanwal* lotus behind the eyes. The current of the Nectar is flowing from that well into the body. But the soul, forgetting that current, is wandering in the world outside and is suffering many privations.

Everything is in the house of the human body, and there is nothing outside of it. Those who have received the Grace of the *Guru*, are at peace both within and without. The current of the Nectar is falling in showers inside them, and by drinking it they remain in bliss and ecstasy, day and night. The soul that has been separated from the Nectar for many lives, attains this state through the help of the *Sant*s.

Guru Arjan says,

सभ किछु घर महि बाहरि नाही। बाहरि टोलै सो भरमि भुलाही।।
गुर परसादी जिनी अंतरि पाइआ सो अंतरि बाहरि सुहेला जीउ।।
झिमि झिमि वरसै अंमृत धारा।। मनु पीवै सुनि सबदु बीचारा।।

अनद बिनोद करे दिन राती सदा सदा हरि केला जीउ।।
जनम जनम का विछुड़िआ मिलिआ।। साध कृपा ते सूका हरिआ।।
सुमति पाए नामु धिआए गुरमुखि होए मेला जीउ।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (माझ म० 5, पृ० 102)

All things are in Your home, and not one is without; he, who searches without, is lost in doubt. The one who realises the Lord within by the Guru's Grace, is at peace both within and without. When the Nectar drops into one's self, the mind hears Shabd and drinks the Nectar, the devotee is ever in joy, and ever sports with the Lord. He who was separated from Him birth after birth, is united with the Lord. By the Master's Grace the dry tree blossoms into flowers; the seeker gets right advice and praises the Name; he becomes a devotee and unites with the Lord.

- *Amrit* is behind the Covering of the Mind.

The Nectar lies behind the covering of the mind. When the mind becomes still, the Nectar manifests itself. On attaining it, one becomes immortal.

मेरा बिरही नामु मिलै ता जीवा जीउ।।
मन अंदरि अंमृतु गुरमति हरि लीवा जीउ।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (गउड़ी म० 4, पृ० 175)

I long for the Name of the Lord; I can live only if I get It. In the temple of the mind, is the Ambrosial Nectar of the Lord; through the Guru's teachings, we drink It in.

नानक अंमृतु मनै माहि पाईऐ गुर परसादि।।
तिनी पीता रंग सिउ जिन्ह कउ लिखिआ आदि।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (सारंग की वार म० 2, पृ० 1238)

O Nanak, the Nectar is within the mind, but one attains It by the Guru's Grace alone. And they alone drink It with abandon, in whose lot it is written by the Primeval God.

When the mind is rid of its perversions and is purified, it obtains the Essence of the Nectar.

गुरमती मनु निरमलु होआ अंमृतु ततु वखानै।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (प्रभाती म० 3, पृ० 1334)

Through the Guru's Teachings, the mind becomes Immaculate, extolling the Ambrosial Essence.

Who can taste *Amrit*?

According to Gurbani, he alone can drink the Nectar, who dies while living or in other words, becomes dead (unattached) to the world, while still living in it.

जो जन मरि जीवे तिन्ह अंमृतु पीवे मनि लागा गुरमति भाउ जीउ।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (आसा म० 4, पृ० 447)

The humble beings, who remain dead while yet alive, drink in the Ambrosial Nectar; through the Guru's Teachings, their minds embrace love of the Lord.

Our outer senses have free play, while the subtle and causal senses are dormant. When the soul puts an end to the activities of the outer senses and travels within to the subtle and spiritual regions, it is called the state of 'dying-while-living'. If the soul leaves the nine doors and becomes concentrated at the tenth door behind the eyes, it can then drink the Nectar.

How is *Amrit* obtained?

- Through the Grace of the Lord.

This Nectar can be had through the kindness of the Lord. A person by himself can do nothing about it. Everybody may try to get it, but it is only when the Lord wishes that this fruit grows in the ground of one's heart.

हरि हरि नामु अंमृतु है नदरी पाइआ जाइ।।

अनदिनु हरि हरि उचरै गुर कै सहजि सुभाइ।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (मलार म० 3, पृ० 1258)

The Name of the Lord, Hari, Hari, is ambrosial Nectar. By the Lord's Grace, it is obtained. Chanting the Name of the Lord, Hari, Hari, night and day, peace and poise of the Guru is obtained.

सभु को बीजे आपणे भले नो हरि भावै सो खेतु जमाइआ।।

गुरसिखी हरि अंमृतु बीजिआ हरि अंमृत नामु फलु अंमृतु पाइआ।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (गउड़ी की वार म० 4, पृ० 304)

All may sow the seed for their good; but that alone germinates which the Lord wills. The devotee of the Master sows the Seed of Nectar, and he reaps the Lord's Ambrosial Naam as his Ambrosial Fruit.

- Through One's Destiny.

It is only when it is so ordained and inscribed on the forehead, that one can taste the Nectar of the Lord within.

जिसु धुरि भागु होवै मुखि मसतकि तिनि जनि लै हिरदै राखी।।
हरि अंमृत कथा सरेसट ऊतम गुर बचनी सहजे चाखी।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (सिरीराग म० 4, पृ० 87)

Those who have good destiny, pre-ordained and inscribed on their foreheads, grasp it and keep it enshrined in the heart. Through the Guru's Teachings, they intuitively taste the sublime, exquisite and Ambrosial Sermon of the Lord.

- Through the Perfect Master and His Service.

The Nectar fills all space; no place is without it. But the proud and the vain people cannot have even a drop of it. "Water, water everywhere but not a drop to drink" – is their lot. The Nectar, which is sought for by gods and goddesses and sages and hermits, can be had only from the Master.

सुरि नर मुनि जन अंमृतु खोजदे सु अंमृतु गुर ते पाइआ।।
पाइआ अंमृतु गुरि कृपा कीनी सचा मनि वसाइआ।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (रामकली म० 3, पृ० 918)

The angelic beings and the sages search for the Nectar, but It can be had from the Master only; it is when the Master blesses one with the Nectar, that one enshrines the True One in the heart.

The Nectar cannot be had by one's own unaided efforts. Unless we take shelter with a Master who dispenses it, we cannot come upon it. This boon is the reward of serving the Master.

अउखधु नामु निरमल जलु अंमृतु पाईऐ गुरू दुआरी।।
कहु नानक जिसु मसतकि लिखिआ तिसु गुर मिलि रोग बिदारी।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (सोरठ म० 5, पृ० 616)

The Nectar-Name, the cure-all, the Immaculate Water, one attains at the Guru's door. O Nanak, he who is so fated, receives It from the Master, and is cured of all diseases.

अंमृत रसु हरि गुर ते पीआ।। हरि पैनणु नामु भोजनु थीआ।।
नामि रंग नामि चोज तमासे नाउ नानक कीने भोगा जीउ।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (माझ म० 5, पृ० 99)

I drank the Lord's Nectar-Name from the Guru, the Lord's Name became my food, my clothing, The Name is my delight, the Name is my play and entertainment. O Nanak, I have made the Name my enjoyment.

मेरे सतिगुरा हउ तुधु विटहु कुरबाणु।।
तेरे दरसन कउ बलिहारणै तुसि दिता अंमृत नामु।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (सिरीराग म० 5, पृ० 52)

O my True Guru, I am sacrifice to You. I am a sacrifice to the Blessed Vision of Your Darshan. By the Pleasure of Your Will, You have blessed me with Ambrosial Naam, the Name of the Lord.

आपे ही प्रभु देहि मति हरि नामु धिआईऐ।।
वडभागी सतिगुरु मिलै मुखि अंमृतु पाईऐ।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (गउड़ी बैरागनि म० 3, पृ० 163)

God Himself bestows wisdom; and we dwell on the Lord's Name. By good fortune, we meet the True Guru, and taste the Ambrosial Nectar.

अंमृत सबदु अंमृत हरि बाणी।। सतिगुरि सेविए रिदै समाणी।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (माझ म० 3, पृ० 119)

Shabd is Amrit; the Lord's Bani is Amrit. Serving the True Guru, It permeates the heart.

- By Surrendering to the Will of the Master and Acting on His Commandments.

The Nectar is obtained by surrendering to the Will of the Master, acting according to His advice and by listening to His discourses.

मन मेरे सतिगुर कै भाणै चलु।।
निज घरि वसहि अंमृतु पीवहि ता सुख लहहि महलु।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (सिरीराग म० 3, पृ० 37)

O my mind, keep in harmony with the True Guru. Dwell within the home of your own inner being, and drink in the Amrbrosial Nectar; you shall attain the Peace of the Mansion of His Presence.

गुर के भाणे विचि अंमृतु है सहजे पावै कोइ।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (सिरीराग म० 3, पृ० 31)

Amrit, the Ambrosial Nectar, is in the Guru's Will; with ease, It is obtained.

संता संगि निधानु अंमृतु चाखीऐ।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (सिरीराग म० 4, पृ० 91)

In the company of Sants one tastes the Treasure of the Ambrosial Nectar.

हरि अंमृत बूंद सुहावणी मिलि साधू पीवणहारु।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (माझ म० 5, पृ० 134)

The Divine Nectar is delicious to the taste; it is only when you meet a Sant that you drink It.

नानक नामु जपै सो जीवै।। साधसंगि हरि अंमृतु पीवै।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (गउड़ी म० 5, पृ० 200)

O Nanak, he alone is alive who meditates on the Name; he keeps the company of Sants and quaffs at the Nectar.

This Nectar permeates every pore of a Perfect Master. A single glance from Him can transform a sinner into a Saint.

सतिगुर विचि अंमृतु है हरि उतमु हरि पदु सोइ।।

नानक किरपा ते हरि धिआईऐ गुरमुखि पावै कोइ।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (गउड़ी की वार म० 4, पृ० 300)

Nectar abides in the Master; He is sublime, His station is high. O Nanak, by His Grace, one meditates on the Lord; the Gurumukhs obtain Him.

The Master is a Pool of Nectar. Only by great good fortune, can one bathe in it and become pure.

सतिगुरु पुरखु अंमृत सरु वडभागी नावहि आइ।।

उन जनम जनम की मैलु उतरै निरमल नामु दृड़ाइ।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (सिरीराग म० 4, पृ० 40)

The Guru is a Pool of Nectar; those who are fortunate, bathe in It. The dirt of all their births is then washed away, and they are attuned to the pure Name of the Lord.

The object of human birth is to obtain this Nectar, and it can be had from a Perfect Master only. Putting on different kinds of robes and garments and cunning are of no help. Through them, one cannot obtain the Nectar-Name. And without the Nectar-Name, there is no escape from delusion.

जिसु जल निधि कारणि तुम जगि आए सो अंमृतु गुर पाही जीउ।।
छोडहु वेसु भेख चतुराई दुबिधा इहु फलु नाही जीउ।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (सोरठ म० 1, पृ० 598)

The Treasure of the Name, for which you have come into the world – that Ambrosial Nectar is obtained from the Guru. Renounce all costumes, disguises and clever tricks; the fruit is not obtained by duplicity.

Who Obtains *Amrit*?

Only one out of several millions may get this Divine Nectar to drink.

अंमृत नामु भोजनु हरि देइ।। कोटि मधे कोई विरला लेइ।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (प्रभाती म० 3, पृ० 1335)

The Lord distributes the Elixir of the Nectar-Name; but only one in millions receives It and partakes of It.

अंमृत बाणी गुर की मीठी।। गुरमुखि विरलै किनै चखि डीठी।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (माझ म० 3, पृ० 113)

Sweet is the Nectar-Name of the Master; but rare is the one who gets to taste It.

अंमृतु सचा वरसदा गुरमुखा मुखि पाइ।।
मनु सदा हरीआवला सहजे हरि गुण गाइ।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (आसा म० 3, पृ० 428)

The true Ambrosial Nectar rains down, and tickles into the mouth of the Guurmukhs. Their minds are forever rejuvenated, and they naturally, sing the Glorious Praises of the Lord.

गुरमुखि धिआवहि सि अंमृतु पावहि सेई सूचे होही।।
अहिनिसि नामु जपहु रे प्राणी मैले हछे होही।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (मलार म० 1, पृ० 1254)

The Gurumukhs meditate, and obtaining the Ambrosial Nectar, they become pure. Day and night, chanting the Name of the Lord, O mortal, makes the filthy immaculate.

झिमि झिमे झिमि झिमि वरसै अंमृत धारा राम।।
गुरमुखे गुरमुखि नदरी रामु पिआरा राम।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (आसा म० 4, पृ० 441)

Gently, gently, gently, very gently, the drops of Ambrosial Nectar trickle down. Becoming Guru's mouth-piece, the Gurumukh beholds the Beloved Lord.

हरि अंमृत कथा सरेसट ऊतम गुर बचनी सहजे चाखी।।
तह भइआ प्रगासु मिटिआ अंधिआरा जिउ सूरज रैणि किराखी।।
अदिसटु अगोचरु अलखु निरंजनु सो देखिआ गुरमुखि आखी।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (सिरीराग की वार म० 3, पृ० 87)

The Lord's Gospel is Nectar-sweet and glorious and one tastes It through the Guru's Word, the natural way. His mind is illumined and his darkness dispelled, as the rising sun ends the night, and the invisible, the imperceptible and the unknowable is seen by a True Devotee (Gurumukh).

घर ही महि अंमृतु भरपूरु है मनमुखा सादु न पाइआ।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (सोरठ की वार म० 3, पृ० 644)

The home within is filled with Ambrosial Nectar, but the self-willed manmukh does not get to taste It.

Within one's self is the Nectar; but those puffed up with pride know not its taste.

हउ बलिहारी गुर आपणे जिनि सची बूझ दिती बुझाइ।।
जगतु मुसै अंमृतु लुटीऐ मनमुख बूझ न पाइ।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (मलार की वार म० 3, पृ० 1282)

I am a sacrifice to my Master, who revealed to me the Truth. The world has been deceived, and the Ambrosial Nectar is being plundered. The self-willed manmukh does not realise this.

Benefits of *Amrit.*

Gurbani mentions numerous benefits that accrue from tasting the Nectar:

- As a Result of Enjoying the Taste of the Nectar, one Gives Up all other Tastes and Becomes truly Detached.

ना तिसु भूख पिआस मनु मानिआ।। सरब निरंजनु घटि घटि जानिआ।।
अंमृत रसि राता केवल बैरागी गुरमति भाइ सुभाइआ।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (मारू म० 1, पृ० 1039)

His mind is content, he hungers not, nor thirsts; he sees the Immaculate One in all hearts. Imbued with the Lord's Ambrosial essence, he becomes a pure, detached renunciate; he is lovingly absorbed in the Guru's Teachings.

- *Amrit* Fills Everybody.

He who tastes it knows its intense sweetness. By tasting it, one becomes immersed in it and is made fearless. He is not troubled by *Kaal* (the Negative Power). He becomes free and brings about the release of his family.

अंदरु अंमृति भरपूरु है चाखिआ सादु जापै।।
जिन चाखिआ से निरभउ भए से हरि रसि ध्रापै।।
हरि किरपा धारि पीआइआ फिरि कालु न विआपै।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (मारू की वार म० 3, पृ० 1092)

The Nectar fills everyone within; he who tastes It knows it. He becomes free of fear and is filled with the Divine Ambrosia. He receives It by the Lord's Grace, and thereafter is not afflicted by death.

तुधु आपे धरती साजीऐ चंदु सुरजु दुइ दीवे।।
दस चारि हट तुधु साजिआ वापारु करीवे।।
इकना नो हरि लाभु देइ जो गुरमुखि थीवे।।
तिन जमकालु न विआपई जिन सचु अंमृतु पीवे।।
ओइ आपि छुटे परवार सिउ तिन पिछै सभु जगतु छुटीवे।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (सिरी राग की वार म० 2, पृ० 83)

You Yourself created the earth, and the twin lamps of the sun and the moon. You created the fourteen world-shops, in which Your Business is transacted. The Lord bestows His Profits on those who become Gurumukh. The Messenger of Death does not touch those, who drink in the True Ambrosial Nectar. They themselves are saved, along with their family; all those who follow them, are saved as well.

- *Amrit* gives the Nine Treasures, and also, Occult and Material Powers.

It leads to happiness and peace; fear, doubt, perversions and sins are destroyed. Egotism disappears, and the craving for the illusory pleasures of *Maya* is quenched. The mind becomes still and pure, and one gains salvation and tranquillity. After drinking the Nectar, one is accepted in the Court of the Lord.

From this it is evident that the Nectar, so much praised by the *Guru*s, and the Nectar which one is urged to drink, is *Naam* or *Shabd* (Inner Music) which pervades all hearts. A Perfect Master, with his loving and kindly glance, can plant the Nectar-tree within us and enable us to drink the Nectar.

The Sikhs use Nectar prepared with the help of a sword. On looking into this matter, we find that this is prepared after repeating bani or a name. While repeating a name, its power permeates the materials or objects upon which one is concentrating. The *Sant*s, who are lovers of the Name, are filled with Divine Light.

पूरन जोत जगै घट महि तब खालस तांहि निखालस जाणे।।

-- गुरु गोबिंद सिंह, दसम ग्रन्थ (सवैये 33, 1)

When the full Light shines in their hearts, the Immortal One knows them to be pure. (Sirdasam.org p.712)

Such *Sant*s, by their Nectar-filled glance, can raise the dead. They bestow the boon of the Name upon barren minds. The glance of *Sant*s has Nectar in it. One can become a *Sant* by a mere glance from one of them.

अंमृत दृसटि पेखै होइ संत।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (गउड़ी सुखमनी म० 5, पृ० 287)

Beholding His Ambrosial Glance, one becomes saintly.

- One can Drink *Amrit* only through the Grace of the Master.

Those persons are indeed fortunate, who become immortal by partaking of it. They become like a bee at the Lotus Feet of the Master and enjoy lasting bliss.

अंमृतु पीवहु सदा चिरु जीवहु हरि सिमरत अनद अनंता।।
रंग तमासा पूरन आसा कबहि न बिआपै चिंता।।
भवरु तुम्हारा इहु मनु होवउ हरि चरणा होहु कउला।।
नानक दासु उन संगि लपटाइओ जिउ बूंदहि चातृकु मउला।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (गूजरी म० 5, पृ० 496)

Drink the Lord's Nectar and gain life-eternal. Remember Him and be ever in bliss. Live in joy, with desires all fulfilled. May you never be troubled by worries. Let this mind of yours be the bumble bee, and let the Lord's feet be the lotus flower. Says slave Nanak, attach your mind to them, and blossom forth like the song-bird, upon beholding the rain-drop.

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LISTENING TO DIVINE SOUND
(Kirtan or Bhajan कीर्तन या भजन)

As commonly understood, '*Kirtan*' or '*Bhajan*' simply means 'singing the hymns of the *Sant*s'. There is a power of attraction even in the outer melody, and concentration and refinement of one's feelings may be secured by listening to it. There are two powerful forces, which attract living beings – beauty and melody. Of the two, melody has the greater power of attraction and influences the mind to a greater extent.

The deer, for instance, which can outrun a horse and is hard to catch, is attracted by melody and is then easily caught. When the hunter plays music in the forest, the deer is attracted by its notes and comes to rest its head on the musical instrument and is thus caught. The influence of music on serpents and birds is a matter of common experience. The snake-charmer, for example, plays on his lute and the serpent, forgetting for a moment its venomous nature, submits tamely to the piper. The influence of melody on man is far greater. Outer music certainly has a powerful effect on the mind, but it cannot take us into the higher spiritual worlds.

*Sant*s and *Guru*s say that *Shabd* शब्द (the Divine Sound) is resounding constantly inside every one of us, and that contact with it brings deliverance to the soul. This Melody has been described as *Akhand Kirtan* अखण्ड कीर्तन (ceaseless music) in the Aadi Granth, the holy Sikh Scripture.

हरि कीरति उतमु नामु है विचि कलिजुग करणी सारु।।
मति गुरमति कीरति पाईऐ हरि नामा हरि उरि हारु।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (कानड़ा की वार म० 4, पृ० 1314)

To chant the Lord's Praise and His Name is sublime and exalted; this is the most excellent deed in this Dark Age of Kali Yuga. His Praises come through the Guru's Teachings and Instructions. Wear the Necklace of the Lord's Name.

The *Guru*s regard *Naam* (the Name of God, the Word or *Shabd*) as the only means of obtaining the Lord. *Naam* or true *Kirtan* (Devotional Music) is within us; the Name is omnipresent. The Divine Melody of *Naam* can be heard in the region of the forehead.

तेरे दुआरै धुनि सहज की माथै मेरे दगाई।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (रामकली भगत कबीर, पृ० 970)

The Melody plays at your door, in the region of the forehead, beyond the bounds of the three gunas (attributes). (Kabir)

No spiritual practice other than that of *Naam* or *Shabd* (Divine Sound) is advised in this Iron Age. Of all the practices, rites and observances, *Naam* is the most fruitful and the most suitable in this Age; no other practice is so effective or worthwhile.

चहु जुगा का हुणि निबेड़ा नर मनुखा नो एकु निधाना।।
जतु संजम तीरथ ओना जुगा का धरमु है कलि महि कीरति हरि नामा।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (बिलावल म० 3, पृ० 797)

This is the essence of the wisdom of the Four Ages: celibacy, self-control and pilgrimages were good for Three Ages; Naam is the only proper means for the Iron Age.

हरि कीरति रुति आई हरि नामु वडाई हरि हरि नामु खेतु जमाइआ।।
कलिजुगि बीजु बीजे बिनु नावै सभु लाहा मूलु गवाइआ।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (आसा म० 4, पृ० 446)

The season of singing the Lord's Praise has arrived; the Lord's Name is glorified, and the Name of the Lord, Hari, Hari, grows in the field of the body. Now is the time of the Iron Age, the time in which it is right and proper to sow the seed of the Name. To sow any other seed in this Age, is labour lost and utter waste.

The practice of *Naam*, and the ability to listen to its music, may be learned only from Perfect *Sant*s and holy men, by their Grace.

राम नाम कीरतन रतन वथु हरि साधू पासि रखीजै।।
जो बचनु गुर सति सति करि मानै तिसु आगै काढि धरीजै।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (कलिआन म० 4, पृ० 1326)

The Kirtan of the Praise of the Lord's Name is a priceless jewel. The Lord has given it for the Holy to keep. Whoever accepts as True and follows the Guru's Teachings – this Jewel is taken out and given to him.

The *Guru*s say that only those who find a Perfect Master can practice *Naam* and can gain contact with it by implicit faith. It is only a true devotee, who can do this.

जिन कंउ सतिगुरु भेटिआ से हरि कीरति सदा कमाहि।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (वडहंस की वार म० 3, पृ० 592)

Fortunate is he, who finds a Satguru, for he will always hear the Music within.

Unless one meets a Perfect Master and 'dies while living' by rising above the nine doors of the body, he does not obtain release, and he does not really hear the true *Kirtan*. *Guru*s say that only *Naam* or *Kirtan* within is true *Kirtan*, and not choral singing in places of worship.

निरति करे बहु वाजे वजाए।। इहु मनु अंधा बोला है किसु आखि सुणाए।।
अंतरि लोभु भरमु अनल वाउ।। दीवा बलै न सोझी पाइ।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (आसा म० 3, पृ० 364)

Dancing and singing to instruments is a vain attempt to tame the mind; the mind is blind and deaf to this mimicry. The fire of worldly attachment burns within, and the wind of doubt blows constantly, 'tis hard to light the lamp of Right Understanding.

गावहि गीते चीति अनीते।। राग सुणाइ कहावहि बीते।।
बिनु नावै मनि झूठु अनीते।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (आसा म० 1, पृ० 414)

We have sung His praises for many ages in songs that please the ear and move the heart, but uninspired by Naam, it is all delusion.

Just as a magnet attracts iron, similarly the melody of *Naam*, which emanates from the Lord, attracts the soul to His feet. The mind is fond of pleasures and nothing in this world can make it remain still. It leads everybody in the world to

dance to its tune. There is only one way to still the mind, and that is by listening to the inner music of *Naam*, or *Shabd*. Whoever has stilled the mind has done so by this method, the various benefits of which are described in the writings of the *Guru*s.

All the defects of the senses are removed by this practice – enmities end, lust, anger, attachment, greed and pride are banished. The soul, which for ages has been sleeping the slumber of worldly attachment and *Maya* (illusion) awakens; the devotee is saved from death and the Lord of Death. He is released from birth and death. He becomes detached while living in the world, and the mind, which is otherwise uncontrollable, becomes enchanted as a result of hearing the Inner Melody, that is, *Naam*, and becomes still. These benefits cannot be gained by listening to external music.

This precious treasure, *Naam* is inside everyone, and one should search for it in the Company of *Sant*s and holy men. This is the only way to make one's life worthwhile.

Bani बानी - The Word or Speech of God.

The subject of the Word or *Bani (*or *Vani* in Sanskrit*)* is a very deep and subtle one. The word *Bani* (meaning word or speech) is generally understood to mean a set of words which can be read, written or spoken; but the term 'Word' is used in a much more abstruse sense in the Aadi Granth.

In general, there is not much difference between *Bani* (speech), *Shabd* (Sound), or *Naam* (Name). They are generally used as interchangeable terms and denote the same thing. Although it is impossible to have the inner experience of hearing the Music of the Word, without the aid and guidance of a Master, and without labour, one can nevertheless understand it to some extent by study. In all languages and all countries, *Bani* or speech is of two kinds: *Varnatmak* वर्णात्मक (spoken or written) and *Dhunatmak* धुनात्मक (inexpressible, unutterable or unstruck).

Varnatmak speech, that is, sounds that can be spoken or written, are of four kinds, namely: *Vaikhari* वैखरी, *Madhyama* मध्यमा, *Pashyanti* पश्यंति and *Para* परा. The first is uttered by the tongue, the second by the throat, the third by the heart and the fourth is the one by which *yogi*s create waves or currents in the region of the navel. Since these are within the six *chakra*s or centres in the body and are devoid of *Naam*, they do not lead to release. The Third Sikh Guru said,

तेरीआ खाणी' तेरीआ बाणी।। बिनु नावै सभ भरमि भुलाणी।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (माझ म० 3, पृ० 116)

The four classifications of the creation are Yours; the spoken word is Yours as well. Without the Name, all are deluded by doubt.

Through spoken words, which can be heard by the outer ears and which are described as 'airy speech' by the *Guru*s, one tends to become more and more engrossed in the activities of the mind and the matter. The spoken words are described by the *Guru*s in this way because they are heard through the agency of the air.

आखणु सुनणा पउण की बाणी इहु मनु रता माइआ।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (सिरीराग म० 1, पृ० 24)

This speaking and listening is like the song of the wind for those whose minds are coloured by the love of Maya.

The *Dhunatmak* Word (Melody-based Sound) cannot be written or spoken. It is beyond the range of the air and the elements and transcends the six *chakra*s or body centres. It has been called the Name of God (*Naam*) in the Aadi Granth.

Truly speaking, even after traversing the six centres up to the bounds of the universe, that is still under the control of the three *Guna*s or modes of thought and action, that is, up to and including *Trikuti* त्रिकुटी (apex of the regions of the three *Guna*s), and even up to the Tenth Door, the sound that animates these regions is described by the *Guru*s as "three-modal sound", the snare of *Brahm* ब्रह्म. Kabir Sahib says,

त्रै गुण बाणी ब्रहम जंजाला।।
पड़ि वादु वखाणहि सिरि मारे जमकाला।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (गउड़ी म० 3, पृ० 230)

The songs of Brahma entangle people in the three qualities. Reading about the debates and disputes, they are struck over the head by the Messenger of Death.

Only the real and true Divine Word or Sound is beyond the reach of the Negative Power. It is called *Sacchi Bani* सच्ची बानी (True Word), *Sach* सच (Truth) and *Saar Shabd* सार शब्द (Essential Sound). This Sound, Word, or *Bani* leads to the real spiritual life and to union with the Lord.

गुरमुखि सबदु अंमृतु है सारु।। नानक गुरमुखि पावै पारु।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (रामकली म० 1, पृ० 932)

O devotee, listen to Nanak, the Divine Sound is Nectar. This Sound is the Essence of all; it takes you across the Ocean of this World.

त्रै गुण मेटे खाईऐ सारु।। नानक तारे तारणहारु।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (रामकली म० 1, पृ० 940)

Transcend the three attributes or qualities, and enjoy the Essence, O Nanak; for that Essence redeems.

वाहु वाहु बाणी सचु है सचि मिलावा होइ।।

नानक वाहु वाहु करतिआ प्रभु पाइआ करमि परापति होइ।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (गूजरी की वार म० 3, पृ० 514)

The True Word is blessed, for it unites one with the Truth; Nanak was blessed by it, and realised the Lord through His Grace.

से जन मिले धुरि आपि मिलाए।। साची बाणी सबदि सुहाए।।

नानक जनु गुण गावै नित साचे गुण गावह गुणी समाहा हे।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (मारू म० 3, पृ० 1057)

Those meet Him, whom He wishes to meet. True is the Word, It is sweet Divine Sound. Nanak sings the virtues of the True One, and because of this singing, he merges with the Lord.

आपै आपु मिलाए बूझै ता निरमलु होवै कोइ।।

हरि जीउ सचा सची बाणी सबदि मिलावा होइ।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (सिरीराग म० 3, पृ० 64)

He Himself unites; know Him and become pure. True is the Lord and His Word; Shabd unites one with Him.

सचा सबदु सची है बाणी।। गुरमुखि जुगि जुगि आखि वखाणी।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (आसा म० 3, पृ० 424)

True is Shabd; True is the Word. The devotee sings its praises; people of God, throughout the ages, have sung it.

This does not mean that the external counsel of the *Guru*s or *Sant*s is of no use. On the contrary, their words are very beneficial, since they are the Lord's own utterances given to us through highly developed and gracious *Sant*s and incarnations. They speak to us about their own experiences and their words are more valuable than jewels and precious stones. *Sant*s do not speak from the regions of the mind and intellect; they speak under inspiration from the higher levels of inmost experience.

जैसी मै आवै खसम की बाणी तैसड़ा करी गिआनु वे लालो।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (तिलंग म० 1, पृ० 722)

As the Word of the Lord comes to me, so do I express it, O Lalo.

The inspired speech of the *Sant*s is like the flow of nectar from a divine spring.

बाणी उचरहि साध जन अमिउ चलहि झरणे।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (गउड़ी म० 5, पृ० 320)

Words flow from the mouths of Sants, as from a spring of nectar.

The writings of *Sant*s are faithful records of their experiences in the higher spiritual regions. They are like sign-posts and mile-stones to seekers on the path of Spirituality. They are given out by *Sant*s for the benefit of spiritual seekers.

Except for the words of the Master, all other words are unreal. Those who utter them and those who listen to them are all imperfect.

सतिगुरू बिना होर कची है बाणी।।
बाणी त कची सतिगुरू बाझहु होर कची बाणी।।
कहदे कचे सुणदे कचे कचीं आखि वखाणी।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (रामकली म० 3, पृ० 920)

The words of all but the Master are false. Indeed, all other words are unreal, except those of the Master. Imperfect are they who say or hear them; imperfect is all that they say.

The words of the *Sant*s tell us of another Word, which is the Master of the entire world and which leads to release.

That Word is true, formless, unspoken, and God's own Word, *Naam* or *Shabd*, the immortal source of life. This is the *Dhunatmak Bani* (melody based Sound) mentioned by the earlier sages. It is called the Word in the Christian Bible, and the Muslims call it *Kalma-i-Ilahi* (the voice of God). It is said in the Gospel:

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God and the Word was God. (Bible, St. John 1:1)

The Muslims say that *Kalma*, the Word, created the fourteen regions.

सासतु बेदु सिंमृति सरु तेरा सुरसरी चरण समाणी।।
साखा तीनि मुलु मति रावै तूं ताँ सरब विडानी।।
ता के चरण जपै जनु नानकु बोले अंमृत बाणी।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (आसा म० 3, पृ० 422)

The Word created the Three Worlds, say the Vedas and the Shastras, and they call it the Supreme Power. Nanak dwells at His feet. He utters only the Nectar of the Word.

The power of the Word has been beautifully described in the *Vagambhrni Sukta* of the Rig Veda:

अहं रुद्रेभिर्वसुभिश्चराभ्यहमादित्यैरुत विश्वदेवैः।
अहं मित्रावरुणोभा बिभम्यर्हमिन्द्राग्नी अहमश्विनोभा।।
मया सो अन्नमत्ति यो विषश्यति यः प्राणिति य ईं शृणोत्युक्तम्।
अमन्तवो मां त उप क्षियन्ति श्रुधि श्रुत श्रद्धियं ते वदामि।।

-- ऋग्वेद, वागम्भणी (सूक्त 10:125.1,4)

All the gods dwell in Me; I bring up and nourish all. I keep the world in motion; all is being sustained by Me. All knowledge and action prove fruitful because of Me. (Rig Veda)

In another place, it is said,

अहं सुवे पितरमस्य मूर्धन् मम योनिरप्स्व1न्तः समुद्रे।
ततो वि तिष्ठे भुवनानि विश्वोतामूं द्यां वर्ष्मणोप स्पृशामि।।
अहमेव वात इव प्रवाम्यारममाणा भुवनानि विश्वा।
परो दिवा पर एना पृथिव्यैताबती महिम्ना सं बभूव।।

-- अथर्ववेद (काण्ड 4, सूक्त 30. 7, 8)

I create all the regions and the creatures. I dwell everywhere, like the soul in the body or air in the universe. Beyond the

regions of the sun, beyond this earth and before the world existed, I, by my own greatness and force, manifested myself as this great universe. (Atharva Veda)

The Word contains the principle of the Divine Sound, which is ever resounding at the Door of the Lord.

अनहत बाणी थानु निराला।। ता की धुनि मोहे गोपाला।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (गउड़ी म० 5, पृ० 186)

How wonderful is this Region, which is filled with the Unstruck Music. Even the Lord seems enraptured by it.

गुण गोबिंद नाम धुनि बाणी।। सिमृति सासत्र बेद बखाणी।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (गउड़ी सुखमनी म० 5, पृ० 296)

The Lord's distinctive attribute is the Melody of Naam. The Vedas and Shastras all sing its praises.

देव सथानै किआ नीसाणी।। तह बाजे सबद अनाहद बाणी।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (रामकली भगत बेनी, पृ० 974)

O where is the Temple of God? It is where the Unending Music plays.

The Word was in the beginning of time, it is, and it will be forever.

आखणु वेखणु बोलणा सबदे रहिआ समाइ।।

बाणी वजी चहु जुगी सचो सचु सुणाइ।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (सिरीराग म० 3, पृ० 35)

Even while they (Sants) do, see or speak; they are absorbed in Shabd. The Word existed during all the Four Ages; it is the Truth and the Reality.

The Word emanates from the Lord. It is the Truth. It is the Eternal Reality, and it leads to Immortality.

करतूति सति सति जाकी बाणी।। सति पुरख सभ माहि समाणी।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (गउड़ी सुखमनी म० 5, पृ० 284)

His acts are True; True is His Word. He is the True One, and He pervades all.

सचा सबदु सची है बाणी।। गुरमुखि जुगि जुगि आखि वखाणी।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (आसा म० 3, पृ० 424)

True is Shabd, True is the Word. The people of God have sung its praises throughout the ages.

सचा सबदु सची है बाणी।। गुरमुखि जुगि जुगि आखि वखाणी।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (आसा म० 3, पृ० 424)

The deep dye of the Word never wears away. If you are dyed fast with the Word, its colour will not fade or wear away.

This Word is one that rings throughout the Four Ages. But where? Guru Nanak, the first of the ten Sikh Gurus and the torchbearer of the Sikh religion, says that it is within us and is manifested in the hearts of devotees of the Lord.

घट अंतरे साची बाणी साचो आपि पछाणे राम।।

आपु पछाणहि ता सचु जाणहि साचे सोझी होई।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (सूही म० 3, पृ० 769)

Deep within the nucleus of the heart is the True Word of the Lord. Through the Truth, one realises one own self.

अंमृतु तेरी बाणीआ।। तेरिआ भगता रिदै समाणीआ।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (सिरीराग म० 1, पृ० 72)

Thy Word is Nectar, it dwells in the devotee's heart.

अंतरि बाहरि तेरी बाणी।। तुधु आपि कथी तै आपि वखाणी।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (माझ म० 5, पृ० 99)

Thy Word is inside, Thy Word is outside. 'Tis Thy own Utterance, Thy own Revelation.

The Master speaks the Word of the Lord. He hears it and He reveals it.

गुर की बाणी सभ माहि समाणी।। आपि सुणी तै आपि बखाणी।।

जिनि जिनि जपी तेई सभि निसत्रे तिन पाइआ निहचल थानाँ हे।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (मारू सोलहे म० 5, पृ० 1075)

The Word of the Lord pervades everything; the Master hears It and reveals It. Those who hear It are released; they reach the Eternal Home.

This Word emanates from the Inner Light. To listen to it is true devotion, and it leads to the beloved Feet of the Lord.

मनु बैरागि रतउ बैरागी सबदि मनु बेधिआ मेरी माई।।

अंतरि जोति निरंतरि बाणी साचे साहिब सिउ लिव लाई।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (सोरठ म० 1, पृ० 634)

My mind is detached; it is imbued with detachment; the Word has pierced my mind, O my mother. That is true detachment,

and there alone one sees the Inner Light, and hears the Inner Sound, enrapt in the Love of the Lord.

The great fifteenth century Indian *Sant*, Paltu Sahib, points out the same fact. He says,

उलटा कूवा गगन में तिस में जरै चिराग।।
तिस में जरै चिराग बिना रोगन बिन बाती।।
छः रितु बारह मास रहत जरतै दिन राती।।
सतगुरु मिला जो होय ताहि की नजर में आवै।।
बिन सतगुरु कोउ होय नहीं वाको दरसावै।।
निकसै एक आवाज चिराग की जोतिहिं माहीं।।
ज्ञान समाधी सुनै और और कोउ सुनता नाहीं।।
पलटू जो कोई सुनै ताके पूरे भाग।।
उलटा कूवा गगन में तिस में जरै चिराग।।

-- पलटू साहिब की बानी भाग-1 (कुण्डली 169)

In the sky is an inverted well, and in the well there is a burning candle. The candle is without wick or oil, but nevertheless the candle burns. It burns all the six seasons of the year, and during both the day and night. Meet a Perfect Master, and see the Inner Light. Except the Master, no one else can show it to you. A Sound comes from the flame, which none can hear except in Divine Ecstasy. O Paltu, blessed is he who hears it. An inverted well is in the sky, and a burning candle is in the well.

This is the Word spoken of by the Masters, and it is found in the region known as *Sukhman* or *Sushumna* (the Royal Vein). It comes from the higher spiritual regions.

पूरे गुर की साची बाणी।। सुख मन अंतरि सहजि समाणी।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (धनासरी म० 3, पृ० 663)

True is the Word of the Perfect Master, it comes from Sukhmana, the land of Sahaj (Oneness with the Supreme Lord).

This Word can be obtained from a Perfect Master only.

वाहु वाहु पूरे गुर की बाणी।। पूरे गुर ते उपजी साचि समाणी।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (सूही म० 3, पृ० 754)

Blessed is the Word of the Master; for the Word of the Master rests in Truth.

दूख रोग संताप उतरे सुणी सची बाणी।।
संत साजन भए सरसे पूरे गुर ते जाणी।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (रामकली म० 3, पृ० 922)

One who hears the True Word, is rid of pain and sorrow; It is obtained through the kindness of Sants, as has been revealed to me by the Master.

This Word can be known only by means of the method imparted by the Master or through the Grace shown by Him.

गुरमती नामु रिदै वसाए।। साची बाणी हरि गुण गाए।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (गउड़ी गुआरेरी म० 1, पृ० 222)

Act according to the directions of the Master; let Naam dwell in your heart; sing of the True Word, sing the praise of the Lord.

अंमृत बाणी सतिगुर पूरे की जिसु किरपालु होवै तिसु रिदै वसेहा।।
आवण जाणा तिस का कटीऐ सदा सदा सुखु होहा।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (रामकली की वार म० 5, पृ० 960)

The Word of the Master, life-giving as Nectar, dwells in the heart by His Grace; the devotee's coming and going ceases, and he is ever blessed.

आपे आपि मिलै ता बूझै।। गिआन विहूणा किछू न सूझै।।
गुर की दाति सदा मन अंतरि बाणी सबदि वजाई हे।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (मारू म० 3, पृ० 1044)

It is a boon given by the Master, and one knows It when It reveals itself; without knowledge, there is nothing but groping in the dark; true knowledge comes from Shabd, and It can be heard only by the Grace of the Master.

In reality, the Master is the Word-in-the-flesh, or the Word-made-flesh.

बाणी गुरू गुरू है बाणी विचि बाणी अंमृतु सारे।।
गुरु बाणी कहै सेवकु जनु मानै परतखि गुरू निसतारे।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (नट म० 4, पृ० 982)

The Word is the Guru, and the Guru is the Word. The Nectar is in the Word. If His humble slave believes, and acts according to the Guru's Word (Bani), then the Guru emanicipates him in person.

Guru Arjan Dev, the fifth Sikh Guru, wrote to his Master:

तेरा मुखु सुहावा जीउ सहज धुनि बाणी।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (माझ म० 5, पृ० 96)

Blessed is your mouth! The melody of the Word issues forth from it.

This Word has been called the *Anahad Bani* अनहद बानी (Unending Music), *Augharh Bani* औघढ़ बानी (Unstruck Music) and *Gupti Bani* गुप्ती बानी (Hidden Music) in the Aadi Granth, the holy book of the Sikhs.

अनहद बाणी पूंजी।। संतन हथि राखी कूंजी।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (रामकली म० 5, पृ० 893)

The Unending Music is the hidden treasure; the Sants have kept the key with them.

गुरमुखि साचे का भउ पावै।। गुरमुखि बाणी अघडु घड़ावै।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (रामकली म० 1, पृ० 941)

The devotee lives in awe of the Lord, as he hears the Unstruck Music.

गुपती बाणी परगटु होइ।। नानक परखि लए सचु सोइ।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (रामकली म० 1, पृ० 944)

The hidden Word becomes manifest; Nanak knows it to be the Truth.

The *Guru*s mention a great many benefits of the Word:

It leads one to the highest spiritual stage and takes one across the Ocean of the World. Pride is destroyed. It shows one how to know one's real self, and it shows one how to rise above the world of the three *Guna*s or attributes. It washes away the dirt of all sins. It helps in overcoming the five enemies (lust, anger, greed, attachment and pride). It sets all things right. It removes all difficulties and enables one to meet the Lord.

These benefits cannot be had from any extent of study of writings only. But the rare and elevated souls can gain these benefits from the Word within.

अंमृत बाणी गुर की मीठी।। गुरमुखि विरलै किनै चखि डीठी।।
अंतरि परगासु महा रसु पीवै दरि सचै सबदु वजावणिआ।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (माझ म० 3, पृ० 113)

The Nectar of the Guru's Bani is sweet indeed, but rare are the Gurumukhs who see and taste it. The Divine Light dawns with-

in them, and the Supreme Essence is found. In the True Court, Shabd vibrates.

बाणी बिरलउ बीचारसी जे को गुरमुखि होइ।।
इह बाणी महा पुरख की निज घरि वासा होइ।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (रामकली म० 1, पृ० 935)

The true devotee alone doth know the Word; the Word comes from the Lord and leads to His abode.

As happiness and bliss arise from the Word, ignorance of the Word obviously spells pain.

न सबदु बूझै न जाणै बाणी।। मनमुखि अंधे दुखि विहाणी।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (धनासरी म० 3, पृ० 665)

He who does not know Shabd, he who does not enjoy the Word, the devotee of the mind, he is blind, and he comes to grief.

There is, therefore, great emphasis on the Word in the Aadi Granth.

आवहु सिख सतिगुरू के पिआरिहो गावहु सची बाणी।।
बाणी त गावहु गुरू केरी बाणीआ सिरि बाणी।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (रामकली म० 3, पृ० 920)

O thou, beloved of the Master, sing the True Word. Sing the Word revealed by the Master. Sing the Guru's Bani, the Supreme Word of all words.

Guru-Bani गुरु–बानी - The Word of the Master.

The Word or *Bani* has been already discussed in sufficient details. *Guru-Bani* or *Gurbani* means the same thing as *Bani*.

The Word of the Master is the true Light for the world. It dwells in the mind, by the Grace of the Lord.

गुरबाणी इसु जग महि चानणु करमि वसै मनि आए।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (सिरीराग म० 3, पृ० 67)

Gurbani is the Light of the world; it dwells in the mind, by His Grace.

Its great blessing for the devotee is that all his defects and evils are removed, and his light merges in the Light of the Lord.

In the treasure-house of devotion, the Word of the Master is a precious stone. Those who realise this Word, gain release from birth and death.

भगति भंडार गुरबाणी लाल।। गावत सुनत कमावत निहाल।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (आसा म० 5, पृ० 376)

In the treasury of Devotion, the Word of the Master is a precious stone; realise it and you will be blessed.

Guru-Mantra गुरु–मंत्र - The Initiatory Teachings of the Master.

In the Aadi Granth, the words *Gurbani*, *Bani*, *Shabd* and *Naam* (Name) are all used in more or less the same sense; there is not much difference between them. The *Guru Mantra* is the initiatory teaching imparted by the Master to enable a disciple to reach his original Home in the highest spiritual region. This is *Shabd* or *Naam* in the case of *Sants*, who are Adepts in the practice of *Shabd*. The *Gurus*, accordingly, also use the words '*Guru-Mantra*' in place of the words *Shabd* or *Naam*.

सुणि सजण जी मैडड़े मीता राम।। गुरि मंत्रु सबदु सचु दीता राम।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (वडहंस म० 5, पृ० 576)

Listen to me, my good friend, the Master has given me the Mantra of the True Shabd.

There is Light in such a *Guru-Mantra*.

अंधकार महि गुर मंत्रु उजारा।। गुर कै संगि सगल निसतारा।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (गोंड म० 5, पृ० 864)

The Guru-Mantra is Light in the darkness; the company of the Master redeems us.

It dwells in the heart.

हरि ऊतमु रिद अंतरि भाइओ गुरि मंतु दीओ हरि कान।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (प्रभाती म० 4, पृ० 1335)

When the Guru breathed the Mantra of the Lord into my ear, the Lofty, Exalted Lord became pleasing to my heart.

As mentioned in the Section on the *Bani*, this *Guru Mantra* can be obtained only from the Master.

आठ पहर गावत भगवंतु।। सतिगुरि दीनो पूरा मंतु।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (भैरों म० 5, पृ० 1150)

I sing the praise of the Lord all day; the Master gave me the Perfect Mantra.

The benefits of the *Guru-Mantra* cannot be fully detailed: One is freed from all worldly bondages. Love and faith in remembrance of the Lord are strengthened. One becomes free from the influence of *Maya* (illusion) and *Kaal* (death). All things are set right. One knows oneself at last, and gains release from birth and death. Such a person does not again suffer from pain and worry.

This *Guru-Mantra* is gained only as a result of great good fortune.

साधू की मन ओट गहु उकति सिआनप तिआगु।।
गुर दीखिआ जिह मनि बसै नानक मसतकि भागु।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (गउड़ी म० 5, पृ० 260)

O mind, grasp the Support of the Holy Sant, giving up your clever arguments. One who has the Guru's Teachings within, his mind, O Nanak, has excellent destiny inscribed upon his forehead.

It is not difficult to imagine the plight of a person without the *Guru-Mantra*. Guru Arjan Dev says,

गुर मंत्र हीणस्य जो प्राणी ध्रिगंत जनम भ्रसटणह।।
कूकरह सूकरह गरधभह काकह सरपनह तुलि खलह।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (सहसक्रिती म० 5, पृ० 1356)

Cursed is he and ill-spent is his life, who has not obtained the Guru Mantra. He is like a dog, crow or swine; like an ass or snake is he.

Deeksha दीक्षा - Initiation.

Initiation is mentioned at several places in the hymns of the *Gurus*. To obtain initiation or to be an initiate is the same thing. Muslim holy men use the words '*Bay'at hona*' (getting initiated). The Master gives to the disciple His spiritual Light. He makes him fit to lead a spiritual life. The *Gurus* describe it as the '*Gift of Life*'.

जीअ दानु दे भगती लाइनि हरि सिउ लैनि मिलाए।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (सूही म० 5, पृ० 749)

He gives the Gift of Life; He teaches devotion to the Lord. He unites His disciple with the Lord.

Initiation can be had from a living Master only, and not from the so-called preceptors, who merely whisper a mantra in the ears of the disciples. This gift of Life or Ray of Life can be obtained from a living *Guru*. The life-giving impulse can be obtained only from a living being; it is impossible to get it from books or scriptures.

सतिगुरु देखिआ दीखिआ लीनी।। मनु तनु अरपिओ अंतर गति कीनी।। गति मिति पाई आतमु चीनी।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (गउड़ी म० 1, पृ० 227)

Beholding the True Guru, I have received His Teachings. After searching deep within my own being, I have offered Him my mind and body. I have come to realise the value of realising my own soul.

At the time of initiation, the Master imparts the secret knowledge of the heart. It then becomes possible to make spiritual progress by following the Master's directions. After explaining everything, directions are given which help in repetition, contemplation and manifestation of the Inner *Shabd* or Divine Sound. They help the disciple in his inner ascent. At the time of initiation, the Master gives the Ray of Life and connects him with the Melody of *Shabd*. He then establishes a subtle link with the disciple, guides him and takes him to the Pristine Home.

However learned, religious-minded, self-disciplined or respected a man may be, he remains deluded by the mind and *Maya*. In these circumstances, only a Master can connect him with the inner *Shabd*. However virtuous a man may be, he cannot, by his own efforts alone, contact the Sound. Unless the Master gives him the gift of the Ray of Life and initiates him, he cannot contact the Divine Sound.

At the time of initiation by the Master, the soul becomes fit for being connected with *Shabd*. This moment is considered as the moment of birth in the Master's family.

After a disciple is connected with the *Name* by the Master, he begins to progress on the spiritual path and to get control over his weaknesses. When the seeker progresses on the spiritual path by following the directions of the Master, he does not remain subservient to the body. On the other hand, his soul tends to soar to the spiritual regions, to break off all the ties with the earth and to dwell more and more in the higher regions within.

This gift of the Name is given to a conscious being, and is meant to awaken him to a new life by its animating impulse. How soon one obtains the benefits of initiation depends on the person initiated. It depends on his inner spiritual condition. The inner condition is different in different persons. Certain persons are fully ready, while others are less so. The Master 'injects', as it were, his consciousness and Light into the soul of the disciple at the time of initiation. This injection of His own Consciousness and Light permeates the disciple like leaven, and produces a new spiritual consciousness and Light as the practice of *Naam* is continued. The spiritual Light of the Master gives a new life to the soul of the disciple and begins to free it. Consequently, the disciple begins to have a feeling of fulfilment. This gift of the Master cannot be taken away. Time and *Maya* (illusion) cannot destroy this seed, this Ray of Life. The disciple, once initiated, will certainly progress, sooner or later. He will one day certainly reach his True Home.

Unless one gets initiation, one does not get knowledge and therefore cannot discern the truth. The *Guru* says,

बिनु गुर दीखिआ कैसे गिआनु।। बिनु पेखे कहु कैसो धिआनु।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (भैरों म० 5, पृ० 1140)

Without receiving initiation from the Guru, how can anyone obtain spiritual wisdom? Without seeing, how can anyone have visions during meditation?

What is this Initiation? It is a Ray of the Name or power of God, which can be obtained only from a Perfect Master.

तिन्हा मिलिआ गुरु आइ जिन कउ लीखिआ।।
अंमृतु हरि का नाउ देवै दीखिआ।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (सूही म० 1, पृ० 729)

The Guru comes to meet those whose destiny is so pre-destined. He blesses them with the Teachings of the Ambrosial Name of the Lord.

This initiation is obtained only by great good fortune. When one gets it, the mind becomes happy and still. We know ourselves and are released from birth and death. Initiation from those, who have never gone inward, serves no purpose whatever.

सती पापु करि सतु कमाहि।। गुर दीखिआ घरि देवणि जाहि।।
इसतरी पुरखै खटिऐ भाउ।। भावै आवउ भावै जाउ।।
सासतु बेदु न मानै कोइ।। आपो आपै पूजा होइ।।
काजी होइकै बहै निआइ।। फेरे तसबी करे खुदाइ।।
वढी लै कै हकु गवाए।। जे को पुछै ता पड़ि सुणाए।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (रामकली की वार म० 1, पृ० 951)

This is the Age when men pretend to be pure, but are engaged in sins; spiritual pretenders go about offering initiation; the woman loves her husband only for what he earns and cares not where he goes or when he returns; no one accepts the authority of Scriptures or Vedas; everyone worships his own self; the judge who occupies the seat of justice, counts the beads and utters the name of God, accepts bribes and deals injustice, and is ready to quote chapter and verse when his conduct is questioned.

This world of attachment and *Maya* is like a dangerous ocean, in which everyone is floundering. Only a true devotee can cross it. A disciple, who gets initiation, but practices other rites and austerities and does not give up attachment to the world, is not released from birth and death, and he takes a long time to reach his Pristine Home.

एतु मोहि डूबा संसारु।। गुरमुखि कोई उतरै पारि।।
एतु मोहि फिरि जूनी पाहि।। मोहे लागा जम पुरि जाहि।।
गुर दीखिआ ले जपु तपु कमाहि।। ना मोहु तूटै ना थाइ पाहि।।
नदरि करे ता एहु मोहु जाइ।। नानक हरि सिउ रहै समाइ।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (आसा म० 1, पृ० 356)

Everyone is floundering in attachment; only a true devotee gets free; while others take birth again because of attachment, and visit the abode of death because of attachment. One may get initiation, but if one recites Scriptures and practices austerities, and cannot give up attachment, he is not accepted. Attachment is removed through Grace alone; O Nanak! then alone, one merges with the Lord.

Vakhar वक्खर - Riches.

The *Guru*s say that the sole purpose of man's birth in this world is to enable him to gather the merit (riches or merchandise) through which he may be accepted at the door of the Lord. What is this merit, this wealth or *Vakhar*? The *Guru*s say that it is the practice of *Naam* or *Shabd*.

हिकु सेवी हिकु संमला हरि इकसु पहि अरदासि।।
नाम वखरु धनु संचिआ नानक सची रासि।।

-- आदि ग्रंथ (जैतसरी की वार 5, पृ० 710)

I serve the One Lord, I contemplate the One Lord, and to the One Lord, I offer my prayer. Nanak has gathered-in the wealth, the merchandise of Naam; this is the true Capital.

सचु सउदा लै गुर वीचारी।।
सचा वखरु जिसु धनु पलै सबदि सचै ओमाहा हे।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (मारू म० 1, पृ० 1032)

Acquire the true riches of Naam; follow the Master. He who has true riches, merges in Shabd which is Truth.

These riches are the Name or the Word of God. The *Sant*s are its keepers, and it can be obtained only through them.

जिसु वखर कउ लैनि तू आइआ।।
राम नामु संतन घरि पाइआ।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (गउड़ी सुखमनी म० 5, पृ० 283)

The wealth you were born for, the Lord's Naam, is with the Sants.

Just as material goods and merchandise are available in the market, the wealth of *Naam* is available in our body. The body may be likened to a shop with the merchandise of

Naam in it. It may be searched for and found in the body with the aid of a Master.

इहु तनु हाटु सराफ को भाई वखरु नामु अपारु।।
इहु वखरु वापारी सो दृड़ै भाई गुर सबदि करे वीचारु।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (सोरठ म० 1, पृ० 636)

This body is the jeweller's shop, O Siblings of Destiny; the incomparable Naam is the merchandise. The merchant secures this merchandise, O Siblings of Destiny, by contemplating the Guru's Shabd.

Gyan ज्ञान - Knowledge.

The word '*Gyan*' is from the root '*Gya* ज्ञा' to know. The word 'know' in English is another form of it. Ordinarily, knowledge of writing or reading is considered sufficient and great emphasis is laid upon acquiring it. But such knowledge is merely a development of the intellect.

True knowledge or apprehension is, however, an altogether different function and is of the human spirit. There is a mention of both knowledge and science in the 'Bhagavad Gita'. The one imperishable creative Power pervades the perishable things of the world and realisation of this basic fact is described as knowledge; while knowledge of the perishable things created by the Eternal Lord is called science. It is said in the 'Gita', that a man with knowledge and science and practicing yoga sees the Lord in all living creatures and sees all living beings in the Lord:

ज्ञान विज्ञान तृप्तात्मा कूटस्थो विजितेन्द्रियः।।
युक्त इत्युच्यते योगी समलोष्टाश्मकाञ्चनः।।

-- श्रीमद्भगवद्गीता (6:8)

While knowledge and contemplation of material things – both of which are the functions of the mind, may be necessary for a discriminating understanding of the ideal objective, one has still to make an effort to gain that spiritual insight, which comes only when the mind and intellect are stilled. (Gita)

The *Gurus* do not consider reading or writing or thinking as real knowledge. They regard *Shabd* – Sound, and *Naam* – Name, *Sach* – Truth, and *Kirtan* – Internal Music, as knowledge. The inner Melody or Music, which is always resounding in every heart and is present everywhere, is also called knowledge by them.

गिआनु धिआनु गुर सबदु है मीठा।।
गुर किरपा ते किनै विरलै चखि डीठा।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (गउड़ी म० 3, पृ० 162)

The Master's Word is knowledge and apprehension; It is very sweet; one gets it only by the Grace of the Master; only the rare and fortunate ones taste of it.

गिआनु धिआनु धुनि जाणीऐ अकथु कहावै सोइ।।
सफलिओ बिरखु हरीआवला छाव घणेरी होइ।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (सिरीराग म० 1, पृ० 59)

Knowledge and vision are the Melody, and it is Indescribable. It is like a fruitful green tree, which provides immense shade.

गुर गिआनु पदारथु नामु है हरि नामो देइ दृड़ाइ।।
जिसु परापति सो लहै गुर चरणी लागै आइ।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (सूही म० 4, पृ० 759)

In Naam is contained the Master's wisdom; it is through Naam one becomes firm in It. Yea, he alone attains It, who is blest by the Lord, and who submits to the Master's feet.

एको गिआनु धिआनु धुनि बाणी।। एकु निरालमु अकथ कहाणी।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (बसंत म० 1, पृ० 1188)

Deep and serene is the Ocean of Truth; knowledge and meditation do not find It. No one can fathom Its depths.

भाई रे गुर बिनु गिआनु न होइ।।
पूछहु ब्रहमे नारदै बेद बिआसै कोइ।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (सिरीराग म० 1, पृ० 59)

O Siblings of Destiny, without the Guru, there is no Spiritual Wisdom. Go and ask Brahma, Narada aand Vyasa, the writer of the Vedas.

The *Gurus* say that there is Light in this knowledge. Guru Amardas, the third of the ten Sikh Gurus, describes the 'knowledge' of the Master as the 'Eternal Light of the Heart'.

It is conducive to constant devotion, which is the real benefit of *Naam*.

सतिगुर गिआनु सदा घटि चानणु अमरु सिरि बादिसाहा।।
अनदिनु भगति करहि दिनु राती राम नामु सचु लाहा।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (सोरठ म० 3, पृ० 600)

Knowledge is imparted by the Master; It eternally enlightens the heart. His writ runs far and wide, even the kings submit to it. The disciple practices devotion day and night, and obtains the True Name of the Lord.

Guru Arjan, the Fifth Sikh Guru, says in this connection, that when the knowledge of the Master reveals itself, it illumines the heart. The mind becomes satisfied and calm when it drinks the Nectar of *Naam*, and it also becomes fearless.

भइओ प्रगासु सरब उजीआरा गुर गिआनु मनहि प्रगटाइओ।।
अंमृतु नामु पीओ मनु तृपतिआ अनभै ठहराइओ।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (गउड़ी म० 5, पृ० 209)

The knowledge of the Master revealed itself; the heart was enlightened, and all was Light. The mind drank the Nectar and was satisfied; it became fearless and was stilled.

In making spiritual progress, the Master's knowledge enables one to see the Light of the inner suns and moons.

भीतरि अगनि बनासपति मउली सागरु पंडै पाइआ।।
चंदु सूरजु दुइ घर ही भीतरि ऐसा गिआनु न पाइआ।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (बसंत हिंडोल म० 1, पृ० 1171)

There is fire within the plants; the oceans are tied into a bundle. The sun and moon in the sky dwell in the same home (of the body), but you have not obtained this knowledge.

This knowledge is helpful everywhere, both inside and outside. It is behind the veil of the mind, and it is found in the *Sukhman* (Royal Vein) inside every human being.

अंतरि बाहरि संगि सहाई गिआन जोगु।।
तिसहि अराधि मना बिनासै सगल रोगु।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (आसा म० 5, पृ० 398)

Inwardly and outwardly, He is my companion and my helper. He is the One to be realised; adoring Him, my mind is cured of all its ailments.

अंतरि गुर गिआनु हरि रतनु है मुकति करावणहारा।।
नानक जिस नो नदरि करे सो पाए सो होवै दरि सचिआरा।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (वडहंस म० 3, पृ० 593)

The Master gives the light of understanding, and reveals within the Lord's Infinite Treasures; understanding brings release from the world. O Nanak! he alone, to whom He is kind, obtains it; he is truly honoured.

गिआन रतनु मनि परगटु भइआ।। नामु पदारथु सहजे लइआ।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (मारू म० 4, पृ० 1069)

When the mind is illumined by the light of knowledge, it gains immense wealth by possessing the Priceless Name.

गुडु करि गिआनु धिआनु करि महूआ भउ भाठी मन धारा।।
सुखमन नारी सहज समानी पीवै पीवनहारा।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (रामकली भगत कबीर, पृ० 969)

Make Spiritual Wisdom as the jaggery, meditation as the Mahua flowers, and the fear of God as the fire enshrined in your mind. The Sushumna, the central spinal channel, is balanced, and the drinker drinks Wine in it.

This knowledge leads to release from birth and death, and no one, but the Master, possesses it. No one has ever obtained or will ever obtain it without a Master. Its development is a matter of practice, and its secrets can only be had from one who has himself practiced it.

भाई रे गुर बिनु गिआनु न होइ।।
पूछहु ब्रहमे नारदै बेद बिआसै कोइ।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (सिरीराग म० 1, पृ० 59)

O brother, no one but a Master can give you this Knowledge; even so will Brahma tell you, or the sages Narad and Veda Vyasa.

माई गुर बिनु गिआनु न पाईऐ।।
अनिक प्रकार फिरत बिललाते मिलत नही गोसाईऐ।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (देवगंधारी म० 5, पृ० 532)

O mother, without the Guru, Spiritual Wisdom is not obtained. One wanders around, weeping and crying out in various ways, but the Lord of the Creation does not meet them.

कुंभे बधा जलु रहै जल बिनु कुंभु न होइ।।
गिआन का बधा मनु रहै गुर बिनु गिआनु न होइ।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (आसा की वार म० 1, पृ० 469)

Water remains confined within the pitcher, but without water, the pitcher could not have been formed; just so, the mind is restrained by spiritual wisdom, but without the Guru, there is no Spiritual Wisdom.

बिनु गुर किनै न पाइओ हरि नामु हरि सते।।
ततु गिआनु वीचारिआ हरि जपि हरि गते।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (मारू की वार म० 3, पृ० 1093)

No one ever found the Name of the Lord, no one ever met the Lord without a Master. One who contemplates the Essence of Spiritual Wisdom and meditates on the Lord, is saved.

This is the greatest boon conferred by the Master. When the mind is stilled by means of *Simran* सिमरन (repetition of holy names) and meditation, the true knowledge reveals itself. There are very few persons in the world, however, who do this practice. Persons full of lust, anger and pride remain without it. All the desires subside on getting it. One comes to know everything, whether manifest or hidden. He comes to know the three worlds. All his sins and sufferings are done away with.

He gains release from this world and conquers death. He transcends all defects. It is easy to see that this cannot be done by means of external knowledge.

Knowledge is to the soul, what ornaments are to the bride. Adorned with it, the soul feels worthy enough to approach the Lord. The mind is like an elephant, and the Master is like its driver. When the mind is goaded by knowledge, the elephant of the mind does not get out of control. This knowledge, which is *Shabd* or *Naam* or *Bani*, the Word, connects the soul with the Ultimate. When one gets this knowledge, one is freed from birth and death.

When this knowledge is revealed in the heart, the benefits of all other kinds of knowledge, contemplation, meditation and austerities are obtained.

गिआन धिआन सगले सभि जप तप जिसु हरि हिरदै अलख अभेवा।।
नानक राम नामि मनु राता गुरमति पाए सहज सेवा।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (आसा म० 1, पृ० 356)

He who realises the Lord unknowable, has achieved the perfection of all knowledge, contemplation, meditation and austerity. O Nanak, when the mind is imbued with Naam, it attains to the state of Sahaj (Oneness with the Supreme Lord), thus serving best the Master's behest.

Akshar अक्षर - The Esoteric Letter.

The *Guru*s speak highly of the *Akshar* (letter) in their writings, and there is a frequent mention of One letter and Two letters. This 'letter' is described as the Creator of the entire world. Mahatma Madan speaks of two letters:

सो गुरू पूरा कहावे।। दो अक्षर का भेद बतावे।।
एक छुड़ावे एक मिलावे।। तब निशंक निज घर पहुँचावे।।

-- महात्मा मदन साहिब

He is the Perfect Master, who tells the secret of the two letters. One must be given up and the other grasped; that is the way to God, or our Original Home.

The Vedas, Puranas and other books are merely disseminators of the fifty-two letters of the Sanskrit language. One does not gain release by reading them. Without knowing the one letter, or the true letter, or the pure letter, one remains involved in this world. He who knows this true letter, becomes fit to reach the feet of the Lord. The *Akshar Purush* (One-Letter Being) creates the universe by means of the Unending Music; and the universe is destroyed at the time of dissolution. The Vedas and other scriptures do not go beyond this *Akshar Purush*.

The Gita also says,

द्वाविमौ पुरुषौ लोके क्षरश्चाक्षर एव च।
क्षरः सर्वाणि भूतानि कूटस्थाऽक्षर उच्यते।।
उत्तमः पुरुषस्त्वन्यः परमात्मेत्युदाहृतः।
यो लोकत्रयमाविश्य बिभर्त्यव्यय ईश्वरः।।

-- श्रीमद्भगवद्गीता (15:16-17)

In the world there are two Beings: Kshar Purush (the Perishable Being) and Akshar Purush, (the Imperishable Being). Kshar embraces all creatures and their permanent basis is Akshar. Kshar Purush is perishable, while Akshar Purush is the unmanifested basic substance, the unmanifested essence of Prakriti (Nature). But the Supreme Being – called Paramatma, who as the Imperishable Lord, pervades and supports the Three Worlds is different from them. (Bhagavad Gita).

ये त्वक्षरमनिर्देश्यमव्यक्तं पर्युपासते। सर्वत्रगमचिन्त्यं च कूटस्थमचलं ध्रुवम्।।
सन्नियम्येन्द्रियग्रामं सर्वत्र समबुद्धयः। ते प्राप्नुवन्ति मामेव सर्वभूतहिते रताः।।

-- श्रीमद्भगवद्गीता (12:3-4)

But those who worship the Imperishable, the Indefinable, the Unmanifest, the Omnipresent, the Unthinkable, the Rock-Seated, the Immoveable, the Unchanging; keeping the whole host of senses in complete control, looking on all with an impartial eye, engrossed in the welfare of all beings – these come indeed to Me. (Bhagavad Gita)

The *Saar-Shabd* सार–शब्द (Essential Sound) creates the regions between the highest region (*Sat Lok*) and the three worlds. These are destroyed in each dissolution. The real Home is beyond them. It is the original Home of the *Sant*s. *Akshar Purush* अक्षर पुरुष (One-Letter Power) is the means to take us to the Lord.

Some *Sant*s have described this Power as:

- ***Kshar*** क्षर – The gross Material world.
- ***Akshar*** अक्षर – creator of Triloki or the Triple worlds.
- ***Nih-Akshar*** निःअक्षर – The higher Spiritual regions, which are destroyed in each grand dissolution, and
- ***Kshar-Akshar-Nih-Akshar para*** क्षर–अक्षर–निःअक्षर परा – The True Region or *Sat Lok*, which is beyond them.

In the 'Saar Bachan' (Essence of the Teachings), by Swami Ji Maharaj, it is written:

क्षर अक्षर निहःअक्षर पारा। बिनती करे जहाँ दास तुम्हारा।।

-- सार-बचन छंद बंद (7:1:10, पृ० 69)

Beyond Kshar, Akshar and Nih-Akshar, doth Your slave offer prayers.

These abstruse matters are mentioned frequently in the hymns of the *Sant*s, but they can be understood only in the company of *Sant*s who have realised them.

Charan-Kamal चरण–कमल - The Lotus Feet.

There are a number of references to the Lotus Feet of the Master in the hymns of the Sikh Gurus.

चरन पखारि करउ गुर सेवा मनहि चरावहु भोग।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (टोडी म० 5, पृ० 713)

I wash the Guru's feet and serve Him. I dedicate my mind as an offering to Him.

सुणि मन भूले बावरे गुर की चरणी लागु।।
हरि जपि नामु धिआइ तू जमु डरपै दुख भागु।।
दूखु घणो दोहागणी किउ थिरु रहै सुहागु।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (सिरीराग म० 1, पृ० 57)

Listen, O deluded and demented mind; hold tight to the Guru's feet. Chant and meditate on Naam, the Name of the Lord, and death will be afraid of you, and your suffering shall depart. The deserted wife suffers terrible pain. How can her Husband-Lord remain with her forever?

गुर के चरण धोइ धोइ पीवा।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (गउड़ी म० 5, पृ० 239)

Drink the Water with which the feet of the Master have been washed.

गुर के चरन हिरदै वसाए।। मन चिंतत सगले फल पाए।।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (आसा म० 5, पृ० 395)

Let the Feet of the Master dwell in the heart, then you will get everything you desire.

What is the meaning of the Lotus Feet? What should we understand by them? To which feet are we to bow? Which feet are we to wash and then drink the water with which they have been washed? What is meant by the feet, which are to dwell in our hearts and fulfil our desires? Some would say that in this context the Second Guru meant the First Guru, Guru Nanak; the Third Guru meant the Second Guru;

the Fourth Guru meant the Third Guru, and the Fifth Guru meant the Fourth Guru. But Guru Nanak, the first Sikh Guru, also used these words in His hymns. Whom did He mean? Aadi Granth, the holy book of the Sikhs, has been studied from this point of view and various verses from it are given below for the consideration of the readers.

The *Guru*s have referred to the Lotus Feet as follows:

They advise us to bow to the feet of the living Master. For spiritual progress, a living *Guru* is very necessary.

बिनु गुर दाते कोइ न पाए।। लख कोटी जे करम कमाए।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (मारू म० 3, पृ० 1057)

No one can find the Lord, without a Master, even though he may go on making millions of efforts.

Guru Arjan says that one should give up cleverness and prostrate oneself at the feet of the Master.

सभि सिआणपा छडि कै गुर की चरणी पाहु।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (सिरीराग म० 5, पृ० 44)

Give up all pretentions and prostrate yourself at the Feet of the Guru.

Guru Arjan clearly says that prostrating oneself at the feet of the Master and standing in His presence means prostrating oneself at the feet of the living Master.

साधू की होहु रेणुका अपणा आपु तिआगि।।
उपाव सिआणप सगल छडि गुर की चरणी लागु।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (सिरीराग म० 5, पृ० 45)

Become the dust of the Holy Men's feet, and give up egotism; give up all cleverness and prostrate yourself at the Feet of the Master.

उकति सिआणप सगली तिआगु।। संत जना की चरणी लागु।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (गउड़ी गुआरेरी म० 5, पृ० 177)

Give up all cleverness; and prostrate yourself at the Feet of the Sants.

Prostrating oneself at the feet of the Master simply means meeting Him and taking shelter with Him. Similarly, one is often advised to bow at the feet of a slave of the Lord or a holy man or Master, and to think of His feet or to be a sacrifice unto them.

तजि अभिमानु जनम मरणु निवारहु।।
हरि के दास के चरण नमसकारहु।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (गउड़ी म० 5, पृ० 191)

Renounce your arrogant pride, and end the cycle of birth and death. Bow in humility to the Feet of the Lord's devotee.

नामु निधानु धिआईऐ मसतकि होवै भागु।।
कारज सभि सवारीअहि गुर की चरणी लागु।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (सिरीराग म० 5, पृ० 47)

Those who have such blessed destiny written on their foreheads, meditate on the Treasure of Naam. Holding onto the Guru's Feet, all their affairs are brought to fruition.

धनु सु वेला जितु दरसनु करणा।।
हउ बलिहारी सतिगुर चरणा।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (वडहंस म० 5, पृ० 562)

Blessed is that time, when His Blessed Darshan is had; I am a sacrifice to the Feet of the True Guru.

पेखि पेखि जीवा दरसु तुम्हारा।। चरण कमल जाई बलिहारा।।
तुझ बिनु ठाकुर कवनु हमारा।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (सूही म० 5, पृ० 743)

Gazing upon, beholding Your Blessed Darshan, I live; I am a sacrifice to Your Lotus Feet. Other than You, O My Lord and Master, none belongs to me.

The Feet of the living Master have been described as the true place of pilgrimage. By serving a Living Master, one is accepted in the Court of the Lord. The unprotected get protection.

संत जनहु सुणि भाईहो छूटनु साचै नाइ।।
गुर के चरण सरेवणे तीरथ हरि का नाउ।।
आगै दरगहि मंनीअहि मिलै निथावे थाउ।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (सिरीराग म० 5, पृ० 52)

O brother, release is gained by listening to the Name; the service of the feet of the Master is like going on a pilgrimage; you are accepted in His court and find an honoured place there.

It is said that the Nectar flowing from the holy feet of a Master is very sweet and it is only by great good fortune that one gets it. By seeing a Master, one gains millions of benefits.

माई चरन गुर मीठे।।
वडै भागि देवै परमेसरु कोटि फला दरसन गुर डीठे।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (टोडी म० 5, पृ० 717)

O mother, the Feet of the Guru are sweet; one can approach them only by great good fortune. Millions of benefits are gained by seeing the Master.

The *Guru*s also mention drinking the water, with which the feet of the living Master have been washed.

गुर के चरण धोइ धोइ पीवा।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (गउड़ी म० 5, पृ० 239)

Drink the Water with which the Feet of the Master have been washed.

सिमरि सिमरि सिमरि नामु जीवा तनु मनु होइ निहाला।।
चरण कमल तेरे धोइ धोइ पीवा मेरे सतिगुर दीन दइआला।।
कुरबाणु जाई उसु वेला सुहावी जितु तुमरै दुआरै आइआ।।
नानक कउ प्रभ भए कृपाला सतिगुरु पूरा पाइआ।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (सूही म० 5, पृ० 749)

Remember the Name and your body and mind will be blessed; drink the Water with which the Feet of the Master have been washed. Blessed is the time when you go to the Door of the Master; O Nanak, the Lord is kind. You have met a Perfect Master.

It is only by great good fortune that one can attain the feet of the Master.

कहु नानक ता के पूर करंमा जा का गुर चरनी मनु लागा।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (सोरठ म० 5, पृ० 614)

O Nanak, he is the most fortunate, whose mind is attached to the holy Feet of the Master.

कहु नानक जे होवी भागु।। मानु छोड़ि गुर चरणी लागु।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (आसा म० 5, पृ० 372)

O Nanak, fortunate is he who gives up pride and bows at the Feet of the Master.

कहु नानक भला मेरा करम।। जितु भेटे साधू के चरन।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (गउड़ी म० 5, पृ० 191)

O Nanak, blessed am I! for I have had access to the Feet of holy men. Access to the feet of the Master and full opportunity to serve Him are obtained by the Grace of the Lord. It is only through His Mercy that Love for the Master dwells in the heart.

प्रभि बाँह पकराई ऊतम मति पाई गुर चरणी जनु लागा।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (आसा म० 4, पृ० 447)

The Lord came to my help, and Wisdom dawned upon me; my mind turned to the Feet of the Master.

जिसु कृपा करे प्रभु आपणी तिसु सतिगुर के चरण धोइआ।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (गउड़ी की वार म० 4, पृ० 309)

He to whom the Lord is kind washes the Feet of the Master.

कीनी दइआ गोपाल गुसाई।। गुर के चरण वसे मन माही।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (माझ म० 5, पृ० 107)

The Lord had Mercy on me; the Holy Feet of the Master dwell in my heart.

That day is blessed, when a man bows at the feet of the Master. That forehead and beard are blessed, which touch the feet of the Master.

नेत्र पुनीत पेखत ही दरस।। धनि मसतक चरन कमल ही परस।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (गउड़ी म० 5, पृ० 201)

The eyes that see them are blessed; blessed is the forehead that touches His Lotus Feet.

चचा चरन कमल गुर लागा।। धनि धनि उआ दिन संजोग सभागा।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (गउड़ी म० 5, पृ० 254)

Blessed is the day when the mind rests on the Lotus Feet; blessed is that meeting.

से दाड़ीआं सचीआ जि गुर चरनी लगन्हि।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (सलोक वारां ते वधीक म० 3, पृ० 1419)

Blessed are the beards that touch the Feet of the Master.

Bhai Gurdas describes the taking of shelter at the Feet of the Master as follows:

चिरंकाल मानस जनम निरमोल पाए,
सफल जनम गुर चरन सरन कै।।
लोचन अमोल गुर दरस अमोल देखे,
स्रवन अमोल गुर बचन धरन कै।।
नासिका अमोल चरनारबिंद बासना कै,
रसना अमोल गुर मंत्र सुमिरण कै।।
हसत अमोल गुरदेव सेव सफल कै,
चरन अमोल परदच्छना करन कै।।

-- भाई गुरदास, कबित्त सवैये (17)

After many ages, I obtained human birth, and made it fruitful by taking shelter at the Guru's feet. My worthless eyes saw the Master; my worthless ears heard the words of the Master; my worthless nose inhaled the deep fragrance of the Master's holy Feet; my worthless tongue repeated the word of the Master; my worthless hands served the Master; my worthless feet went round Him. (Kabitt 17)

चरन सरनि गुर तीरथ पुरब कोटि
देवी देव सेव गुरु चरनि सरनि है।।
चरन सरनि गुर कामना सफल फल,
रिधि सिधि निधि अवतार अमरन है।।
चरन सरनि गुर नाम निहकाम धाम,
भगति जुगति करि तारन तरन है।।
चरन सरन गुर महिमा अगाधि बोधि,
हरन भरन गति कारन करन है।।

-- भाई गुरदास, कबित्त सवैये (72)

Taking shelter at the Master's Feet is True Worship; occult powers lead to birth and death. Taking shelter with the Master's Name, leads to the Abode of Peace. Devotion and austerities do not bring release; taking shelter at the Master's Feet is of incalculable value. It leads to release and salvation. (Kabitt 72)

जब ते परम गुर चरन सरनि आए,
चरन सरनि लिव सकल संसार है।।
चरन कमल मकरंद चरणामृत कै,
चाहत चरन रेनु सकल आकार है।।
चरन कमल सुख संपट सहज घरि,
निहचल मति परमारथ बीचार है।।
चरन कमल गुरु महिमा अगाध बोधि,
नेति नेति नमो नमो कै नमसकार है।।

-- भाई गुरदास, कबित्त सवैये (217)

Since I have taken shelter with the Master, I have found that the whole world lies at His Feet. The Master's Lotus Feet are the source of Nectar. All the world longs to have the Dust of His feet. The Lotus Feet are the natural home of peace and wealth. They lead to the stilling of the mind and to spiritual meditation. The praise of the Lotus Feet is unfathomable, I bow to them again and again every moment. (Kabitt 217)

The *Gurus* have mentioned various benefits that flow from taking shelter at the feet of the Master: Pains, worries and calamities are removed. Lust, anger, greed and other defects disappear. Both the body and the mind become pure, and one gains peace. All troubles are forgotten and the fear of death is banished. The devotee crosses the ocean of worldly existence. He has constant devotion for the Name. The lotus of the heart flowers into full bloom. The disciple awakens. The Lord dwells in his mind and is seen everywhere. The devotee gets peace and bliss and reaches the Supreme Abode. There are many hymns containing prayers that one may reach the feet of the Master, in order to obtain these benefits.

The *Guru* instructs the disciple how to make the holy feet of the inner Master dwell in the mind.

The living Master is not confined to His body. He also has access to the higher regions of the universe. Contemplation on His inner form is the second step in spiritual progress. When the soul by means of repetition (*Simran*) rises to higher regions, it can stay there only with the help of contemplation on the Master's inner form. The *Gurus*, therefore, say with great emphasis that the feet of the Master should dwell within our 'hearts'.

गुर के चरन हिरदै वसाए।। मन चिंतत सगले फल पाए।।
अगनि बुझी सभ होई सांति।। करि किरपा गुरि कीनी दाति।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (आसा म० 5, पृ० 395)

Let the Feet of the Master dwell in the heart; then the deepest aspirations of the mind shall be fulfilled. The fire is extinguished, and I am totally at peace. Showering His Mercy, the Guru has given this gift.

गुर के चरण हिरदै वसाइ।। दुख दुसमन तेरी हतै बलाइ।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (गउड़ी म० 5, पृ० 190)

Let the Feet of the Master dwell in the heart; all your sufferings will then be ended.

गुर के चरण रिदै उरि धारि।। अगनि सागरु जपि उतरहि पारि।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (गउड़ी म० 5, पृ० 192)

Let the Feet of the Master dwell in the heart; meditating on Him, cross the sea of fire.

Are the holy feet distinct from the form of the Master? No, never. Contemplation on the form of the Master includes contemplation on the feet also. When one sees the feet inside, the entire form is present before one's vision. Disciples have always contemplated on the feet of the Master within. Tradition says that Bhai Gonda Ji, while sitting in meditation at Kabul, contemplated on the feet of Guru Har Rai, the seventh Sikh Guru, from dawn to dusk, and did not allow him to move. The Guru Hargobind sat immovable at Kiratpur all the time. We need the dust of the feet of such disciples, in whose minds the feet of the Master have become manifest, and who (consequently) enjoy the bliss while beholding them. We should be like bees at the Lotus Feet of the Master. May we be a sacrifice unto those, in whose minds these feet are manifest!

In the inner regions the form of the Master and His feet are very radiant. Tulsidas Ji has described the radiance of the Nails of the Master's Feet as follows:

श्रीगुर पद नख मनि गन जोती। सुमिरत दिब्य दृष्टि हियँ होती।।

-- श्रीरामचरितमानस (1:1:3)

The Nails of the Feet of the Master shine like diamonds; when their Vision appears in the inner mind, one gets Divine Sight.

Hazrat Mulla Hussain Kashifi also says in this context:

पीरे कि चू दर दिलत नशीनद, हाले–अज़लो–अबद ब–बीनद।

-- हज़रत मुल्ला काशिफ़ी, कितबुल-बैअत (पृ० 5)

When the Guru is enthroned in your heart, you know everything from beginning to end.

When the Master manifests himself in the heart, you come to know all – from the beginning to the end of things. Disciples with such knowledge merge themselves in the inner form of the Master. Bhai Gurdas says,

दरस धिआन दिब्ब दृष्टि प्रगास भई, करणा कटाछ दिब्ब देह परवान है।।
सबद सुरति लिव बज्जर कपट खुल्ह, प्रेम रस रसन कै अंमृत निधान है।।

चरण कमल मकरंद बासना सुबास, हसत पूजा प्रनाम सफल सुगिआन है।।
अंग अंग बिसम स्रवंग मैं समाइ भए, मन मनसा थकत ब्रहम धिआन है।।

-- भाई गुरदास, कबित्त सवैये (18)

While I was meditating, a Divine Sight came into view, and a merciful Divine Form appeared; the soul merged in Shabd and the Tenth Door opened. The Nectar of Love was found there as a Treasure; I bowed with folded hands to Him and it was accepted; He pervaded every part of the body; the desires of the mind were stilled, and I meditated on the Lord. (Kabitt)

चरन कमल गुर जब ते रिदै बसाए, तब ते असथिर चित अनत न धावई।।
चरन कमल मकरंद चरणामृत कै, प्रापति अमरपद सहज समावई।।
चरन कमल गुर जब ते धिआन धारे, आन ज्ञान ध्यान सरबंग बिसरावई।।
चरन कमन गुर मधुप कमल गति, मन मनसा थकत निज गृह आवई।।

-- भाई गुरदास, कबित्त सवैये (218)

From the time when the Lotus Feet begin to dwell in the heart, the wandering mind does not go out anymore. The Lotus Feet produce freedom-giving Nectar, and one gains the Immortal Region and merges in it. Since I began contemplating on the Feet of the Master, all other knowledge and meditation have been given up. The Feet of the Master are like the honey-producing lotus, the desires of the mind have been stilled, and I have reached the Original Home. (Kabitt)

The Radiant form of the Master appears in the forehead when the soul withdraws itself and gathers at the point behind the eyes called 'the heart' by the *Sant*s. Unless this happens it is impossible to meet the Lord. The form of the Master appears first, and then the Lord. The form always remains with the disciple and takes him to higher regions. It takes him beyond the realm of the three attributes (*Guna*s) to the Fourth Region, and seats him in the Lap of the Lord.

गुर के चरण ऊपरि मेरे माथे।। ता ते दुख मेरे सगले लाथे।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (गउड़ी म० 5, पृ० 187)

I see the Feet of the Master within my forehead, and all my troubles are therefore ended.

सफल मूरति गुरु मेरै माथै।। जत कत पेखउ तत तत साथै।।
चरन कमल मेरे प्रान आधार।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (देवगंधारी म० 5, पृ० 535)

The form of the Master is in my forehead; wherever I look, I see It with me. The Lotus Feet of the Lord are the Support of my very breath of life.

The body (person), within which the Feet of the Beloved or the Lord dwell, is sacred.

जन के चरन वसहि मेरै हीअरै संगि पुनीता देही।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (धनासरी म० 5, पृ० 680)

The Feet of holy men dwell in my heart, and my body is purified.

Only those, to whom the Lord is kind, are able to see the Radiant form of the Master (*Gurudev*).

चरन कमल सिउ रंगु लगा अचरज गुरदेव।।

जा कउ किरपा करहु प्रभ ता कउ लावहु सेव।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (बिलावल म० 5, पृ० 814)

I have enshrined love for the Lotus Feet of the Wondrous Divine Guru. One who is blessed by Your Mercy, God, is committed to his service.

*Sant*s love the Lord and worship the Lotus Feet of the Master.

चरन कमल गुरदेव पिआरे।। पूजहि संत हरि प्रीति पिआरे।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (आसा म० 5, पृ० 394)

They love the Lotus Feet of the Master, they love the Lord and worship His holy Feet.

It is very beneficial to meet those who are the Lord personified. Their feet are wonderful. We praise them again and again and pay them constant homage.

चरन कमल जा के अनूप।। सफल दरसनु सुन्दर हरि रूप।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (गउड़ी सुखमनी म० 5, पृ० 293)

His Lotus Feet are incomparably beautiful. His Blessed Darshan is fruitful and rewarding. His Lordly Form is beautiful.

सफल दरसनु तुमरा प्रभ प्रीतम चरन कमल आनूप।।

अनिक बार करउ तिह बंदन मनहि चर्हावउ धूप।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (जैतसरी म० 5, पृ० 701)

Fruitful is Your Blessed Darshan, O Beloved God. Your Lotus Feet are incomparably beautiful! Time and again, I bow in reverence to You, offering my mind as incense to You.

चरन कमल हिरदै उरि धारे।। तेरे दरसन कउ जाई बलिहारे।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (वडहंस म० 5, पृ० 563)

Let thy Lotus Feet dwell in my heart; may I sacrifice myself before thy Inner Vision.

The *Guru*s always advise spiritual seekers to obtain the boon of the Lotus Feet of the Master and of the Name of the Lord. In various hymns, the *Guru*s speak of bowing at the feet of the Lord and contemplating on them.

हरि चरणी तूं लागि रहु गुर सबदि सोझी होई।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (गूजरी म० 3, पृ० 492)

Grasp the Lord's Lotus Feet through the Guru's Shabd; you shall then come to understand.

हरि चरन कमल सरनाइ मना।।

राम नामु जपि संगि सहाई गुरमुखि पावहि साचु धना।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (रामकली म० 5, पृ० 899)

Seek the Sanctuary of the Lord's Lotus Feet, O my mind. Chant the Name of the Lord, your help and support. Becoming Gurumukh, you shall obtain the True Wealth.

हरि के चरन कमल मनि धिआउ।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (टोडी म० 5, पृ० 714)

Meditate on the lotus feet of the Lord within your mind.

The *Guru*s use the words 'Lotus Feet of the Lord' and 'Lotus Feet' almost in the same sense. What are the Lotus Feet? *Guru*s clearly state that they are the 'Melodies of the Lord', by hearing which man becomes holy. He thus crosses the region of the three attributes (*Guna*s).

नीकी राम की धुनि सोइ।।

चरन कमल अनूप सुआमी जपत साधू होइ।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (सारंग म० 5, पृ० 1228)

Blessed is the Melody of the Lord, beautiful are the feet of the Lord. Meditating on them, one becomes Holy.

The 'Lotus Feet' is another name for the Melody, which one obtains from the company of *Sant*s.

साँति सूख सहज धुनि उपजी साधू संगि निवासा जीउ।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (माझ म० 5, पृ० 105)

Peace, happiness and the Celestial Melody, you get from the company of Sants.

The manifestation of the 'Lotus Feet' means the manifestation of the Melody of *Naam* or *Shabd*.

राम रसाइनि जो जन गीधे।। चरन कमल प्रेम भगती बीधे।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (गउड़ी म० 5, पृ० 198)

Those who drink the Elixir of the Lord, are devoted to love of His Lotus Feet.

बंधन तोड़ि चरन कमल दृड़ाए एक सबदि लिव लाई।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (रामकली म० 5, पृ० 915)

He breaks our worldly bonds, and binds us to the Lotus Feet; He attunes us to Shabd.

हिरदै चरण सबदु सतिगुर को नानक बांधिओ पाल।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (धनासरी म० 5, पृ० 680)

With the Lord's Lotus Feet enshrined in his heart, Nanak has tied Shabd, the Word of the True Guru, to the hem of his robe.

According to the *Gurus*, to meditate on the Name is to meditate on the Lotus Feet of the Lord. Those who become intoxicated with the Name, are also drunk with the Nectar of the Lotus Feet.

चरण कमल नानक रंगि राते हरि दासह पैज रखाईऐ।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (गूजरी म० 5, पृ० 500)

Nanak is filled with Love for the Lotus Feet; O Lord, save the honour of Thy slave.

हरि के चरन कमल मनि धिआउ।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (टोडी म० 5, पृ० 714)

Meditate on the Lotus Feet of the Lord within.

When Light appears in the heart as the result of spiritual practice, it is also taken to be the manifestation of the Lord's Lotus Feet.

चरण कमल रिद अंतरि धारे।। प्रगटी जोति मिले राम पिआरे।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (आसा म० 5, पृ० 375)

One who enshrines His Lotus Feet within the heart, meets the Beloved Lord; the Divine Light is revealed to him.

The *Gurus* clearly say that repetition of the Name is remembrance of the Lord's Lotus Feet.

चलत बैसत सोवत जागत गुर मंत्रु रिदै चितारि।।
चरण सरण भजु संगि साधू भव सागर उतरहि पारि।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (मारू म० 5, पृ० 1006)

Walking, sitting, sleeping or waking, remember the Word of the Master. When in the company of a Sant, ask for shelter at His Feet, you will then cross the Ocean of this World.

To remain at the Lotus Feet of the Lord is the beginning and end of all.

चरन कमल की मउज महि रहउ अंति अरु आदि।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (सलोक भगत कबीर, पृ० 1370)

The mind, in ecstasy at the Lotus Feet, does see the beginning and end of all.

How can one describe the Lotus Feet? They are blissful beyond description, to be known only by experience.

कबीर चरन कमल की मउज को कहि कैसे उनमान।।
कहिबे कउ सोभा नही देखा ही परवानु।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (सलोक भगत कबीर, पृ० 1370)

O Kabir, how can I describe the Grace of the Lotus Feet? There are no adequate words for It; It has to be experienced. (Kabir)

The Lotus Feet dwelling in the 'heart' become our constant protection and support.

चरण कमल जन का आधारो।। आठ पहर राम नामु वापारो।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (माझ म० 5, पृ० 107)

His Lotus Feet are the support of His humble slaves. Twenty–four hours a day, they deal in the Name of the Lord.

चरन कमल अधारु जन का रासि पूंजी एक।।
ताणु माणु दीबाणु साचा नानक की प्रभ टेक।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (धनासरी म० 5, पृ० 675)

Those who rely on the Lotus Feet, who have them for their capital, are honoured in the True Court. O Nanak, the Lord is the only true support.

मीतु सखा सहाइ संगी ऊच अगम अपारु।।
चरण कमल बसाइ हिरदै जीअ को आधारु।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (आसा म० 5, पृ० 405)

He is our friend, supporter and companion, He is the Great, Unfathomable and Infinite One. Let His Lotus Feet dwell in the heart, for He is the Sustainer of all.

चरन कमल का आसरा प्रभ पुरख गुणतासु।।

कीरतन नामु सिमरत रहउ जब लगु घटि सासु।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (बिलावल म० 5, पृ० 818)

O Lord, You are the Treasure of Virtues. I rely for support on Your Lotus Feet. I shall meditate in remembrance on the Praises of Naam, the Name of the Lord, as long as there is a single breath in my body.

The Lotus Feet serve as a ship that takes us across the Ocean of the Universe.

तरण सागर बोहिथ चरण तुमारे तुम जानहु अपुनी भाते।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (गउड़ी म० 5, पृ० 209)

O cross the Ocean; the Lotus Feet are the Ship. His laws are His own; He knows them all.

भै बोहिथ सागर प्रभ चरणा केते पारि लघाए।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (वडहंस म० 5, पृ० 577)

Fearful is the Ocean of the World, but the Lotus Feet of the Lord serve as the ship. They will take you across.

बोहिथड़ा हरि चरण मन चड़ि लंघीऐ।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (आसा म० 5, पृ० 398)

The Lotus Feet of the Lord are the Ship, O mind, use this Ship and sail across.

These Lotus Feet are in the 'heart' and sustain the body and the mind.

स्रवणी कीरतनु सिमरनु सुआमी इहु साध को आचारु।।

चरन कमल असथिति रिद अंतरि पूजा प्रान को आधारु।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (सारंग म० 5, पृ० 1222)

He who hears the Inner Music remembers the Lord. Thus he becomes a holy man, and the Lotus Feet dwell in his heart; he worships them internally, and they sustain his life.

चरन कमल बसिआ रिद भीतरि सासि गिरासि उचारिओ।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (देवगंधारी म० 5, पृ० 534)

The Lotus Feet dwell in the heart, remember them to your last breath.

Only he, for whom it is so ordained by the Lord, loves His Lotus Feet.

सभ परोई इकतु धागै।। जिसु लाइ लए सो चरणी लागै।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (माझ म० 5, पृ० 108)

All are strung on the same thread. He alone, whom the Lord loves, loves the Lotus Feet.

करि किरपा प्रभ नदरि अवलोकन अपुनै चरणि लगाई।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (आसा म० 5, पृ० 384)

The Lord in His Grace makes one love His beauteous and wonderful Lotus Feet.

चरण कमल सिउ लागो मानु।। सतिगुरि तूठै कीनो दानु।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (आसा म० 5, पृ० 376)

The Perfect Master himself gives the boon of the Treasure of the Lotus Feet and reveals them. My mind is attached to the Lord's Lotus Feet. The True Guru, in His Pleasure, has given me this gift.

हउ बलि बलि बलि बलि चरन कमल कउ बलि बलि गुर दरसाइआ।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (सारंग म० 5, पृ० 1212)

Praised be the Lotus Feet. Praised be the Master, who showed them to us.

चरण कमलु गुरि धनु दीआ मिलिआ निथावे थाउ।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (सिरीराग म० 5, पृ० 48)

The Guru has given me the Wealth of the Lotus Feet of the Lord, and I, being shelterless, have now obtained shelter.

By remaining in the company of the *Sant*s, the Lotus Feet dwell in the mind.

साधसंगि होआ परगासु।। चरन कमल मन माहि निवासु।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (प्रभाती म० 5, पृ० 1340)

I became enlightened in the company of Sants; the Lotus Feet now dwell in my mind.

How do these Lotus Feet dwell in the mind? They do so by remembrance of the Lord.

हरि सिमरत सभि मिटहि कलेस।। चरण कमल मन महि परवेस।।
उचरहु राम नामु लख बारी।। अमृित रसु पीवहु प्रभ पिआरी।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (गउड़ी म० 5, पृ० 194)

The remembrance of the Lord removes all suffering, and the Lotus Feet appear in the mind. Repeat the Lord's Name, and do it millions of times; O dear ones of the Lord, drink the Nectar.

प्रभ गुन गाइ बिखै बनु तरिआ कुलह समूह उधारिए।।
चरन कमल बसिआ रिद भीतरि सासि गिरासि उचारिओ।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (देवगंधारी म० 5, पृ० 534)

Singing the Glories of God, one croses over the Ocean of Poison, and saves all his generations as well. The Lotus Feet abide within his heart, and with every breath and morsel of food, he chants the Lord's Name.

When, by repetition of the Name, the mind and senses are stilled, the soul leaves the body and rises higher. The Lotus Feet then appear in the heart. The soul merges in the inner Melody of *Naam*, and the Lord is not forgotten even for a moment. The soul is linked to the inner Melody, and the devotee's attention is so much absorbed in it, and thereby made calm and peaceful, that he forgets all other enjoyments.

महा नाद कुरंक मोहिओ बेधि तीखन सरी।।
प्रभ चरन कमल रसाल नानक गाठि बाधि धरी।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (केदारा म० 5, पृ० 1121)

The great Sound has entranced the deer; it has pierced it with a sharp arrow. Nanak has reached the Lotus Feet of the Lord, and is now tied fast to them.

These Lotus Feet are wonderfully beautiful. It is only with great good fortune, that a holy man is able to become fastened to them. They appear in the minds of devotees.

चरन कमल आनूप हरि संत मंत।। कोऊ लागै साधू।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (आसा म० 5, पृ० 380)

The Lord's Lotus Feet are incomparably beautiful; so is the Mantra of the Sant. How rare is that holy person who is attached to them!

चरन कमल भगताँ मनि वुठे।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (माझ म० 5, पृ० 109)

The Lotus Feet appear in the minds of devotees.

Simran and austerities, pilgrimages and meritorious deeds are all included in the attainment of the Lotus Feet.

चरण भजे पारब्रहम के सभि जप तप तिन ही कीति।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (सिरीराग म० 5, पृ० 48)

He who praises the Lotus Feet of the Transcendental One has achieved all the merit of prayers and austerities.

प्रभ के चरन मन माहि धिआनु।। सगल तीरथ मजन इसनानु।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (गउड़ी म० 5, पृ० 195)

Meditate on the Feet of the Lord in the mind; all pilgrimages, prayers and austerities are included in this meditation (or are accomplished thereby).

हरि नामु लीजै अमिउ पीजै रैणि दिनसु अराधीऐ।।
जोग दान अनेक किरिआ लगि चरण कमलह साधीऐ।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (रामकली म० 5, पृ० 925)

Repeat the Name of the Lord, drink the nectar, praise Him day and night. You shall thus have performed yoga and charities; bow before His feet and realise them.

Bhai Gurdas also praises the Lotus Feet and beautifully describes the fruits of obtaining them:

चरन कमल को महातम अगाध बोध,
अति असचरजमै नमो नमो नम है।।
कोमल कोमलता औ सीतल सीतलता कै,
बासना सुबास तास दुतीआ न सम है।।
सहज समाधि निज आसन सिंघासन मै,
स्वाद बिसमाद रस रमियता अगम है।।
रूप कै अनूप मन मनसा थकत,
अकथ कथा बिनोद बिसमै बिसम है।।

-- भाई गुरदास, कबित्त सवैये (80)

The praise of the Lord's Feet is beyond description. It is wonderful. Bow to them again and again. Tenderest of the tender, coolest of the cool, fragrant and without equal are they. They lead to the natural and easy uplift of the soul. Of superb taste and Unfathomable Essence are they; they are of beauteous form; they still the mind and desires. They give indescribable happiness and infinite pleasure. (Kabitt Sawayye)

चरण कमल भज कमल प्रगास भए,
दरस दरस सम दरस दिखाए है।।

सबद सुरति अनहद लिवलीन भए,
उन मन मगन गगन पुर छाए है।।
प्रेम रस बस होइ बिसम बिदेह भए,
अति असचरजमै हेरत हिराए है।।
गुरमुखि सुख फल महिमा अगााध बोध,
अकथ कथा बिनोद कहित न आए है।।

-- भाई गुरदास, कबित्त सवैये (33)

Praise the Lotus Feet, and the lotus of the heart will be filled with Light. Keep them before your eyes in constant Love, and you will gain insight into the heart of things. All sounds and the soul are absorbed in the Eternal Melody. The mind in sweet oblivion climbs the inward heights. One loses the feeling of the body, overcome by love. The fruit of being a devotee is happiness ineffable; no words are good enough to sing its praise. (Kabitt Sawayye)

चरन कमल मकरंद रस लुभित ह्वै,
सहज समाधि सुख संपट समाने है।।
भैजल भयानक लहर न बिआप सकै,
दुबिधा निवार एक टेक ठहिराने है।।
दृसटि सबद सुरति बरज बिसरजत,
प्रेम नेम बिसम बिस्वास उर आने है।।
जीवन मुकति जग जीवन जीवन मूल,
आपा खोइ होइ अपरंपर पराने है।।

-- भाई गुरदास, कबित्त सवैये (92)

The Nectar of Release is obtained from the Lotus Feet, the soul is uplifted and one gets the Wealth of true happiness; it becomes possible to cross the sea of fearful waves of the world; the Nectar washes away all worries and stills the mind; when the Sound is contacted the soul loses itself in joy; constancy of love and firmness of faith find roots in the heart; life, life-in-release, and the basis of life – all becomes clear, one loses one's self and merges in the Infinite. (Kabitt Sawayye)

- *Charan-Kamal Dhooli* चरण–कमल धूलि **- The Dust of the Lotus Feet.**

The *Guru*s, in addition to mentioning the Lotus Feet of the Lord, also mention the dust of the Lord's Feet in their hymns. A study of the hymns shows that like 'Lotus Feet', the term 'Dust of the Feet' has also been used in different contexts.

The dust is obtained from holy men and *Sant*s. In the hymns of the *Guru*s, the praises of holy men and *Sant*s have been sung in many different ways. We need them for spiritual progress. The *Guru*s say that the whole universe longs to have the dust of holy men's feet. The Lord has ordained it as the means by which one is to cross the Ocean of the World.

जितनी स्रिसटि तुमरी मेरे सुआमी सभ तितनी लोचै धूरि साधू की ताई।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (मलार म० 4, पृ० 1263)

All your universe, my Lord, longs for the Dust of the Feet of the Sants. Both men and gods are anxious to get this Dust.

सरब कलिआण चरण प्रभ सेवा।। धूरि बाछहि सभि सुरि नर देवा।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (भैरों म० 5, पृ० 1138)

The Service of the Lord's Feet leads to salvation. Both seers and sages, men and gods, are eager to get the Dust of His feet.

*Rishi*s and *Muni*s (seers and wise men) such as *Shankar*, *Narad* and others, were all anxious to get this dust, and the very earth on which such *Sant*s walk is made holy.

संकरु नारदु सेखनाग मुनि धूरि साधू की लोचीजै।।
भवन भवन पवितु होहि सभि जह साधू चरन धरीजै।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (कलिआन म० 4, पृ० 1326)

Shankar, Narad, Sesh-naag and Munis – all wish to have the Dust of the Feet of the Sants. All the worlds and realms, where the Holy place their feet, are sanctified.

चरन कमल रज मज्जन परतापि अति,
पूरब तीरथ कोट चरन सरन है।।
चरन कमल रज मज्जन परतापि अति,
देवी देव सेवक हुइ पूजत चरन है।।
चरन कमल रज मज्जन परतापि अति,
कारन अधीन कीन कारन करन है।।

चरन कमल रज मज्जन परतापि अति,
पतित पुनीत भए तारन तरन है।।

-- भाई गुरदास, कवित्त सवैये (339)

This dust doth cleanse as no ritual ablutions can, in this Dust lies the merit of countless pilgrimages; this Dust is holy and wipes off all sins. Even gods and goddesses worship at His feet as humble slaves; the Dust of the Lotus Feet is most beneficial; It conquers all circumstances and gives mastery over actions; the Dust of the Lotus Feet is most purifying; through it sinners become pure and are redeemed. (Bhai Gurdas, Kabitt Sawayye)

Shams-i-Tabriz, the great Persian Saint, says,

चश्म रोशन कुन ज़ ख़ाके औलिया, ताब–बानी ज़इब्तद ता इन्तहा।
सुरमा कुन ज़ ख़ाके ईं बगुज़ीदह रा, हम बसोज़द हम बसाज़द दीदह रा।

-- शम्स तब्रेज़

You should brighten your eyes with the Dust of the Sants, so that you may understand everything from the beginning to the end. You should use the Dust of the Feet of the Lord's chosen beings as collyrium in order to see the Lord.

Illumine your eyes with the dust of the *Sant*s' feet, that you may see the beginning and the end of things. Use the dust of their feet as collyrium, through pain that is very sweet, it makes for clearer vision.

Many places, where *Sant*s lived or where they spent time in devotion and enlightened people, have become centres of pilgrimage. Thus many sacred places have come into being owing to the greatness of holy men, *Sant*s and devotees. For the Sikhs, Nankana Sahib, Panja Sahib and Kartarpur are considered sacred in memory of Guru Nanak. Khandur Sahib was founded in memory of Guru Angad. Because of Guru Ramdas and Guru Arjan Dev, Amritsar and Taran Taran respectively are considered holy places.

Similarly, the following are considered as sacred: Mecca and Medina by the Muslims; the rivers Ganges, Yamuna, Saraswati and Godavari and the city of Kashi, Banaras, by the Hindus; and Jerusalem by the Christians.

The *Guru*s say in this respect:

जितने तीरथ देवी थापे सभि तितने लोचहि धूरि साधू की ताई।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (मलार म० 4, पृ० 1263)

All the gods to whom the places of pilgrimage are dedicated, crave for the Dust of the Feet of the Sants.

गंगा जमना गोदावरी सरसुती ते करहि उदमु धूरि साधू की ताई।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (मलार म० 4, पृ० 1263)

The Ganges, Yamuna, Godawari and Saraswati, all crave for the Dust of the Feet of the Sants.

Places of pilgrimage are revered because of their association with holy men, *Sant*s and sages. *Sant*s and other holy men, however, are not attached to any one single place. The place, where they sit, becomes sacred. They are mobile centres of pilgrimage.

Bhai Gurdas says,

सुरसरी सुरसती जमना गोदावरी,
गइआ प्राग सेत कुरखेत मानसर है।
काँशी कांची दुआरावती माइआ मथुरा अजुध्या,
गोमती अवंतका केदार हिमधर है।
नरबदा बिबिधि बन देवसथल कवलास,
नील मंदराचल सुमेर गिरवर है।
तीरथ आथ सत धरम दइआ संतोख,
स्री गुरु चरन रज तुल न सगर है।।

-- भाई गुरदास, कबित्त सवैये (416)

The Ganges, Saraswati, Yamuna and Godawari, Gaya, Prayag, Set, Kurukshetra and Mansarovar, Kashi, Kanchi, Dwarka, Mathura and Ayodhya, Gomti, Avantika and snow-bound Kedar Nath, Narmada, various forests, sacred spots and Kailash, the blue Mandrachal, and Mount Sumer, sacred spots, wealth, truth, righteousness, compassion and contentment, all of them together are not equal to the Dust of the Feet of the Master. (Kabitt Sawayye)

कोटनि कोटान मणि को चमतकार वारउ,
ससीअर सूर कोट कोटन प्रगास जी।
कोटन कोटानि भागि पूरन प्रताप छबि,
जगमग जोति है सुजासु को निवास जी।

सिव सनकादि ब्रहमादिक मनोरथ कै,
तीरथ कोटानि कांट बाछत है तास जी।
मसतकि दरस को महातम अगााधि बोधि,
स्री गुर चरन रज मात लगै जास जी।

-- भाई गुरदास, कबित्त सवैये (421)

Sacred is the Dust of the Master's feet, blessed is the Dust rubbed on the forehead; blessed are those that see it, they get all that is desired. Nothing is as great as the glory of the forehead, neither the brilliance of a million jewels, nor the effulgence of millions of suns and moons, nor the splendour of great palaces, won by great good fortune, can equal the glory of this dust. (Kabitt Sawayye)

Repetitions of mantras, austerities and visiting the sixty-eight holy places of pilgrimage are nothing as compared to the dust of the *Sants*' feet.

संत कृपा ते मिटे मोह भरम।। साध रेण मजना सभि धरम।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (गउड़ी गुआरेरी म० 4, पृ० 183)

Attachment and doubt are removed by the Grace of the Sants. Taking a bath in the dust of the feet of the Holy – is True Dharmic Faith.

तृपति अघावनु साचै नाइ।। अठसठि मजनु संत धूराइ।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (आसा म० 5, पृ० 377)

The True Name satisfies the mind; the dust of the Feet of the Sants gives the merit of baths at all the sixty-eight holy places.

दरसनु देखि भई मति पूरी।। अठसठ मजनु चरनह धूरी।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (गउड़ी म० 1, पृ० 224)

My desire was fulfilled on seeing the Master. By rubbing the Dust of His feet on my forehead the benefit of bathing at the sixty-eight sacred places was obtained.

It is only after obtaining the dust of the feet of the *Sant*s, that a man is really alive.

प्रभ दइआल किरपाल हजूरि।। नानक जीवै संता धूरि।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (धनासरी म० 5, पृ० 676)

The Lord is Merciful and Omnipresent; Nanak has found life, for he has obtained the Dust of the Sants' feet.

It is only when the Lord wishes it, that a person gets the dust of the feet of the *Sant*s. It can be had only through His Grace.

नानकु मंगै दानु हरि संता रेनारु।। होरु दातारु न सुझई तू देवणहारु।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (बिहागड़े की वार म० 3, पृ० 556)

Nanak asks for the gift of the Dust of the Feet of the Sants of the Lord. You alone are the Giver, O Lord, I do not see any other.

It is not everyone, who gets the dust of the feet of the Lord's loved ones.

कहु नानक जो जन प्रभ भाए।। ता की रेनु बिरला को पाए।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (भैरों म० 5, पृ० 1143)

O Nanak, the Dust of the Feet of those who are dear to the Lord is a rare boon.

संत धूरि पाईऐ वडभागी।। नानक गुर भेटत हरि सिउ लिव लागी।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (गउड़ी म० 5, पृ० 193)

Only a fortunate man gets the Dust of Sants' Feet; O Nanak, it is only by meeting the Guru, that one is attuned to the Lord.

One may inwardly obtain the dust or ray of the Radiant form of the *Sant*s. The bright rays which emanate from the feet of the Radiant form of the *Sant*s are described as the Dust of their Feet.

अंमृतु नामु निधानु भोजनु खाइआ।।
संत जना की धूरि मसतकि लाइआ।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (सोरठ की वार म० 4, पृ० 652)

I partook of the Nectar of the Name; I rubbed the Dust of the Sants' Feet on my forehead.

Tulsidas Ji also says that the nails of the feet of the Master are brighter than diamonds.

श्री गुरु पदनख मनि गन जोती।। सुमिरत दिव्य दृष्टि हिय होती।।

-- श्रीरामचरितमानस (1:3)

The Nails of the Feet of the Master shine like diamonds; by remembering them, one gets Divine Sight. (Ramacharitmanas)

Tulsi Sahib says that if you wish to see the dust of *Sant*s' feet, you should clean the mirror of the mind and body, and keep the soul constantly at the centre behind the eyes. By

contemplating in this way, you will know the inner secret and see the Light of the dust of the feet of the *Sant*s.

छच्छा छिन छिन सुरति सँकी वार लार दृग के रहो।।
तन मन दरपन माँज साज स्रुति से गहौ।।
लगन लगै लख पार सार तब पाइया।।
अरे हाँरे तुलसी संत चरन की धूर नूर दर्साइया।।

-- तुलसी साहिब की शब्दावली भाग-1 (ककहरा 7, पृ० 25)

Keep your soul behind the eyes every moment; cleanse the mirror of the mind and the body and beautify the soul; when you are fully concentrated you will realise the secret. O Tulsi, you will then see the Light of the Dust of the Feet of the Sants. (Tulsi Sahib)

What is this Dust? The *Guru*s describe it as Nectar or the precious *Naam* of the Lord.

बिनवंति नानक धूरि साधू नामु प्रभू अमोलई।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (धनासरी म० 5, पृ० 691)

Nanak says that the Dust of the Feet of the Sants is the precious Naam.

The Dust of the *Sant*s' Feet is in every heart and sustains all. This is the Nectar or Word of the Lord.

घटि घटि अंतरि सगल अधारु।। नानकु जाचै संत रेणारु।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (धनासरी म० 5, पृ० 677)

It is in all hearts and sustains them. Nanak begs for the Dust of the Sants' Feet.

हरि अंमृत बाणी गावै।। साधा की धूरी नावै।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (सोरठ म० 5, पृ० 623)

One should sing of the Nectar of Naam, and bathe in the Dust of the Sants' Feet.

The Dust of the Feet of the Lord is applied to the forehead. This precious dust is beyond the reach of gods, goddesses and men.

मेरै माथै लागी ले धूरि गोबिंद चरनन की।।
सुरि नर मुनि जन तिनहू ते दूरि।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (नामदेव धनासरी, पृ० 694)

My forehead is covered with the Dust of the Feet of the Lord; it is beyond the reach of gods and men. (Namdev)

If one can get the dust of a holy man's feet, he will obtain the merit of visiting millions of sacred places and of countless fasts and disciplines.

तीरथ वरत लख संजमा पाईऐ साधू धूरि।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (सिरीराग म० 5, पृ० 48)

By obtaining the Dust of Sants' Feet, one obtains all the benefits of pilgrimages, fasts and disciplines.

By obtaining the dust of the *Sants*' feet, all calamities, troubles, grieves and pains of separation are removed. Egotism, lust and other sins are destroyed. All the dirt is removed from the mind, and it becomes pure. Other desires and aspirations are fulfilled. One becomes free from the wheel of birth and death and becomes happy. The fear of death vanishes and illusion disappears. Millions of living beings are redeemed and gain release. The Lord is seen everywhere. The devotee is honoured both here and hereafter, and in the Court of the Lord. He enjoys natural and true happiness and real wealth.

Bhai Gurdas has beautifully described the benefits of the dust of the feet of the *Sant*s. He says,

चरन कमल मकरंद–रस लुभित हुइ, मनु मधुकर सुख संपट समाने है।
परम सुगंध अति कोमल सीतलता कै, बिमल सथल निहचल न डुलाने है।
सहज समाधि अजि अगाधि लिव, अनहद रुन झुन धुनि उर गाने है।
पूरन परम जोति परम निधान दान, आन गिआन धिआन सिमरन बिसराने है।

-- भाई गुरदास, कबित्त सवैये (271)

One gets the sweet Nectar from the Lotus Feet, and the mind is filled with sweet happiness. The Lotus Feet are sweet-scented and very delicate. They are the Abode of everlasting peace. From them, one gets the unfathomable spiritual delight. The Unending Music proceeds from them. They are the givers of Supreme Light and wealth. All other knowledge, meditation and remembrance are forgotten. (Kabitt Sawayye)

चरन सरन रज मजन मलीन मन, दरपन गति गुरमति निहचल है।
गिआन गुर अंजन दै चपल खंजन दृग, अकुल निरंजन धिआन जल थल है।
भंजन भै भ्रम अरि गंजन करम काल, पंच परपंच बलबंच निरदल है।

सेवा करंजन सरबातम निरंजन भए, माइआ मै उदास कलि मल निरमल है।
-- भाई गुरदास, कबित्त सवैये (295)

By applying the Dust of the Master's Feet to the unclean mind, it becomes clean, like a mirror, and is firmly attached to the Master's Words. The Master gives the collyrium of Knowledge; He demolishes the Fort of Deception. The Immaculate One pervades all lands and seas. The Dust removes all fear and doubt, and takes one beyond action and time. It breaks the power of the Five Senses, its service is the service of the highest Immaculate One. It makes one free from illusion and free from sufferings. (Kabitt Sawayye)

चरन कमल रज मसतकि लेपन कै, भरम करम लेख सिआमता मिटाई है।
चरन कमल चरनामृत मलीन मनि, करि निरमल दूत दुविधा मिटाई है।
चरन कमल सुख संपट सहज घर, निहचल मति एक टेक ठहराई है।
चरन कमल गुर महिमा अगाधि बोधि, सरब निधान अउ सकल फलदाई है।।
-- भाई गुरदास, कबित्त सवैये (337)

By applying the dust of the Lotus Feet to the forehead, all doubts, illusions and dread of destiny are removed. The Nectar of the Lotus Feet cleans the unclean mind and removes doubts. The Lotus Feet are the natural home of happiness; the mind is stilled and is given a firm support; the praise of the Lotus Feet of the Master is Unfathomable and Incomprehensible. It leads to the attainment of all Treasures and all Virtues. (Kabitt Sawayye)

चरन कमल रज मजन कै दिबि देह, महा मल मूत्र धारी निरंकारी कीने है।
चरन कमल चरनामृत निधान पान, त्रिगुन अतीत चीत आपा आप चीने है।
चरन कमल लिज आसन सिंघासन कै, त्रिभवन अउ त्रिकाल गंमिता प्रबीने है।
चरन कमल रस गंध रूप सीतलता, दुतीआ नासति एक टेक लिव लीने है।
-- भाई गुरदास, कबित्त सवैये (338)

By applying the Dust of the Lotus Feet to the body, the body is cleansed of foul matter and becomes the Abode of God. By drinking the Nectar of the Lotus Feet, one is freed from the three modes (Gunas) and knows oneself. By the Light of the Lotus Feet enthroned in the heart, one knows all the Three Worlds and Ages. The Nectar of the Lotus Feet is sweet-scented and soothing. There is nothing equal to it. It is the only true support. (Kabitt Sawayye)

Besides the Dust of the Lotus Feet of *Sant*s, a mention of the dust of the feet of devotees is also made in the scriptures.

जन नानकु धूड़ि मंगै तिसु गुरसिख की जो आपि जपै अवरह नामु जपावै।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (गउड़ी की वार म० 4, पृ० 306)

O Nanak, ask for the Dust of the Feet of the Devotee, who himself repeats Naam and makes others do so.

Bhai Gurdas says,

चरन कमल रज गुरसिख माथै लागी, बाँछत सकल गुरसिख पग रेन है।
कोटिन कोटान कमला कलपतरु, परस अंमृत चिंतामणि कामधेनु है।
सुर नर नाथ मुनि त्रिभवण औ त्रिकाल, लोग बेद ज्ञान उनमान जेन केन है।
कोटिन कोटानि सिख संगति असंख जांकै, नमो नमो गुरमुखि सुखफल देन है।

-- भाई गुरदास, कबित्त सवैये (193)

I put the Dust of the Devotee on my forehead; all else is but the dust of the road. This Dust is the Wish-giving Tree amongst millions of trees. It is like the Divine Nectar, the lode-star, or the wish-fulfilling cow. Gods, men, yogis and wise men in all the Three Worlds and Three Ages have studied the Vedas and reasoned about their meaning; millions of gatherings of millions of disciples bow to the Devotees of the Master and gain happiness. (Kabitt Sawayye)

The *Guru*s pray again and again that they may obtain the dust of the Lotus Feet, and every sincere seeker searches for it.

Surat-Shabd Yoga सुरत–शब्द योग - The Yoga of Spirit-Sound Current.

The word, '*Surat*' means attention, consciousness, meditation, or the soul. The word '*Shabd*' means the Dhunatmak or Melody-based Name or Power of the Lord. '*Yoga*' means the uniting of the *Surat* with *Shabd* and becoming one with it. Hearing the Melody, the soul is irresistibly drawn to it. This Melody is resounding everywhere, but unless we are attentive we cannot hearit. This Melody is the *Shruti* श्रुति (that which is heard) of the sages. It is also called *Udgit* उद्गीत, or

the music from above. It is not an external or worldly music; it is the music of the soul. Sufis call it *Sama*. It can be heard by the soul. Muslim holy men call it Sultan-ul-Azkar – King of Melodies, *Saut-e-Sarmadi* – Divine Voice and *Saut al-Nasr* – the Voice of Victory.

In Hindi, the word '*Surat*' means consciousness. It refers to the conscious being of man, namely, the soul. It is for this reason that it came to mean the soul. *Shabd* or Celestial Music has already been discussed in several sections. '*Yoga*' means union or connection. The method, by which the soul may become absorbed in *Shabd* and become united with it, so that it will never separate from it again, is called *Surat-Shabd-Yoga*, or the union of the soul with the Divine Music of the Lord.

Surat-Shabd Yoga is very ancient and has existed from the very beginning; it is natural. One cannot add to or subtract anything from it. *Shabd* was in the beginning; it created this universe. The soul has a natural affinity for the Heavenly Music of *Naam*.

*Yoga*s are of different kinds. The object of the lower yogas is to awaken the Serpent Power (*Kundalini* कुण्डलिनी). These yogas are concerned with the *chakra*s चक्र (centres) of the body. The *Sant*s have not accepted them. Good health can be obtained by means of *Hatha-Yoga* हठ–योग. Through *Prana-Yoga* प्राण–योग, the yoga of breathing in certain ways, control of the breath can be achieved, and health and long life can be attained. Through the yoga of the mind, *Raja-Yoga* राज–योग one can control the mind. The yoga of knowledge, *Gyan-Yoga* ज्ञान–योग sharpens the intellect and enables one to understand the oneness of the soul and God.

The six *chakra*s or centres of *Brahmand* (the second spiritual region) are reflected in the regions below it. The reflection of the six centres of *And* (the Subtle region) is seen in *Pind*, the physical universe. The *Sant*s disregard the six lower centres of the body and enjoin the practice of listening to the Celestial Music at the Eye Centre, which is above the

six lower centres. They consider *Surat-Shabd Yoga*, the *Yoga* of uniting the soul with the Divine Sound, to be the highest of all the *yoga*s. Its object is to connect the soul with *Shabd* and by this means to merge the soul in the Supreme Silence (*Ashabd* अशब्द), the *Akah* अकह (Unutterable) and the *Nirala* निराला (Wonderful), from which it originally emanated. Without the soul, there can be no yoga or worldly activity.

Guru Nanak says,

जेहि सुरति तेहा तिन राहु।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (सिरीराग म० 1, पृ० 25)

As is their awareness, so is their way.

सुरति होवै पति ऊगवै गुरबचनी भउ खाइ।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (सिरीराग म० 1, पृ० 18)

When one heeds with reverence the Guru's Word, his soul is awakened and he is honoured in the Court of the Lord.

Kabir Sahib and all the *Sant*s and the Ten Gurus of the line of Guru Nanak have taught the practice of *Surat-Shabd Yoga*. What is *Surat-Shabd Yoga*? It is another name for the practice of the Name of the Lord.

नानकि नामु निरंजन जान्यो कीनी भगति प्रेम लिव लाई।।
ताते अंगदु अंग संगि भयो साइरु तिनि सबद सुरति की नीव रखाई।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (सवैये म० 4, पृ० 1406)

Nanak knew the immaculate Name, and gave it Devotion with Love. Guru Angad had it as part of him, He showered the Heavenly Music continuously.

And this is the means of meeting the Lord:

पारि साजन अपारु प्रीतमु गुर सबद सुरति लंघावए।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (तुखारी म० 1, पृ० 1113)

On that far shore is Your Beloved, Infinite Friend. Only your awareness of the Guru's Shabd will carry you across.

Surat-Shabd Yoga is easy to practice. One does not have to undergo suffering while practicing it, as in other yogas. It is accordingly called *Sahaj-Yoga* सहज–योग, or the Easy Path. One does not have to make any effort except that of listening to the Melody of *Shabd* with close attention. A child, youth,

or an old person belonging to any sex, caste, creed and country can practice this yoga.

One does not have to undergo hardships as in *Hatha-Yoga*. One can practice it while living at home and carrying on one's worldly duties. It is not necessary to change one's religion in order to practice it. Anyone belonging to any race, community, religion or faith can practice it.

- The Practice of *Surat-Shabd Yoga*.

There are three phases of *Surat-Shabd Yoga*, namely *Simran* सिमरन (repetition or remembrance), *Dhyan* ध्यान (contemplation), and *Dhun* धुन (Melody). *Simran* consists in repeatedly remembering a certain specified thing. The full details of this practice can be obtained from a Perfect Master. In the beginning *Simran* is *Varnatmak*, i.e., practiced by means of spoken words. Later on, however, it is performed by means of the 'tongue' of thought. When it becomes firmly established and the power of remaining in concentration is developed, inner Light appears and also the beautiful Radiant form of the Master. This form pulls the soul towards it, and in this way, contemplation is completed. The object contemplated upon, the contemplation and the contemplator become one. The Ideal, the contemplation and the doer become one.

When a disciple remembers an ideal again and again and fixes the eyes of contemplation on it again and again, the *Nirat*, or soul's power of sight, will visualize its shape and absorb its effect. In this way, the soul and the soul's power of seeing rest in 'calm fixity' and the Divine Melody is heard during contemplation. The seeker should fix the attention of the soul on the Melody described by the Master. The power of speech should merge in *Simran* or repetition, the power of sight in contemplation, and the power of hearing in the *Dhunatmak* or Unutterable *Naam*. The disciple should seal his tongue, eyes and ears with Simran, contemplation and the Divine Melody.

तीनों बंद लगाय कर मुख से कछू न बोल।
बाहर के पट देय कर अंतर के पट खोल।।
तीनों बंद लगाय कर नाम निरंजन लेय।
अंतर के पट तब खुलैं जब बाहर के पट देय।।

-- संत कबीर

Close the three apertures (ears, eyes and mouth); make no loud recitations. Close the outer apertures and open the inner ones. Close the three apertures and repeat the Name of the Immaculate One; the Inner Apertures will open only when the outer ones are closed. (Kabir)

These three practices are done at the eye centre, also called the Third Eye and the two-petalled lotus centre. The Eye Centre is between the two eye-brows. For the practice of *Surat-ShabdYoga*, it is necessary to obtain initiation from a Perfect Master or *Sant*. Progress in this *yoga* is made in the company of *Sant*s. When the Lord sends His Grace from His Original Home, then only one gets the blessing of meeting a true Master and of being in His company. After meeting a Master, the disciple need not observe any formal religious rites or ceremonies. The Master, by His Grace, makes the disciple practice *Surat-Shabd Yoga*.

करमु होवै सतिगुरू मिलाए।। सेवा सुरति सबदि चितु लाए।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (माझ म० 3, पृ० 110)

By His Grace, one meets a Master; and the Master initiates one into the practice of Surat-Shabd Yoga.

For the practice of this Yoga, it is necessary to have a secluded spot away from noise. To achieve inner seclusion, the Masters teach a perfect method by which the disciple closes the outer doors and sits in one-pointed concentration. He is asked to practice at a fixed time, morning and evening. At that time, one has to gather one's attention at the seat of the soul, which is behind the eyes, mid-way between the two eye-brows. The Hindus call it the 'Third Eye' or *Teesra Til* तीसरा तिल, and the Muslims call it *Nuqta-e-Safaida* or the Eye Centre. It is not necessary to put pressure on any vein or oth-

er part of the body. It is sufficient if you fix your attention at that point in the body.

This is the point, which is referred to by Lord Krishna as being in the middle of the root of the nose. During this exercise, one performs the *Simran*, or repetition, as directed by the Master, and also contemplates on Him. He should not let any other thought enter his mind. In this way, he should gather together at the Eye Centre the consciousness, which normally pervades every pore of the body, and fix his attention at the Eye Centre. The full details of this practice and also of the difficulties and obstructions that may be experienced are described by the Master at the time of initiation, so that the disciple may avoid them. The Master also helps the disciple internally and protects him.

बिखड़े दाउ लंघावै मेरा सतिगुरु सुख सहज सेती घरि जाते।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (बसंत हिंडोल म० 5, पृ० 1185)

My True Guru will assist you, even on your most difficult moves, you shall reach your True Home in celestial peace and poise.

It is dangerous to practice this *Yoga* without initiation, after merely reading books or after hearing about it from others. Maulana Rumi gives the same advice. He says that one should seek a Master because, without a Master, this path is full of risks and dangers. He says,

पीर रा बगुज़ी कि बे पीरई सफ़र। हस्त बस पुर आफ़तो ख़ौफ़ो ख़तर।

-- मौलाना रूमी

Seek a Master for this journey; without a Master it is full of risks and dangers.

What is the sign of success in the practice of this *yoga*? It is that one loses all consciousness of the body. In the beginning, the hands and feet become numb, and then other parts gradually become numb. The currents of consciousness which flow downwards and give life to the body gather together at the centre of the soul – the Eye Centre – and the rest of the entire body loses consciousness. Unless one rises completely above the nine doors (the eyes, ears, nostrils,

mouth and two lower apertures), one remains ignorant of the divine vision.

चू ज़ जि बेरूँ नयामद आदमी। बाशिद अज़ तस्वीरे ग़बी आअजमी।

Unless a man rises above Physical consciousness, he remains without the Divine Vision.

Kabir Sahib also says that the soul, which is wandering around in the nine doors, cannot find the invaluable treasure. He says,

नउ घर देखि जु कामनि भली बसतु अनूप न पाई।।
कहतु कबीर नवै घर मूसे दसवैं ततु समाई।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (गउड़ी भगत कबीर, पृ० 339)

O fair damsel, you have searched in all the nine doors, but have not found the precious Treasure. O Kabir, the nine doors hold it not; It is inside the Tenth Door. (Kabir)

When the powers that normally operate at or through the nine doors gather together, the Divine Melody is heard and the inner Light is seen. The connection with the gross senses ceases, and the subtler regions come into view. The soul, mind and intellect all become finer and purer.

तिथै घड़ीऐ सुरति मति मनि बुधि।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (जप जी म० 1, पृ० 8)

There the soul, mind and intellect find their real and proper form.

All the faculties of the devotee improve. The faculties of his soul and mind become finer. The intellect is sharpened. On listening to the Melodies of the Divine Sound, the mysteries of all the higher and finer spiritual regions are revealed.

When the soul by means of *Simran* or repetition is gathered at the Eye Centre and crosses the starry regions, the sun and the moon, it beholds the Radiant form of the Master within. This form accompanies the disciple to the ultimate Home. The attention of the disciple then becomes strongly concentrated. He reaches this stage by means of *Simran* or repetition. *Simran* is not much needed thereafter. The disciple worships and meditates on the *Guru*, and by degrees the two become one. He becomes "*Fana-fish-Sheikh*" (one with the Master). He merges in the Master. The hint given by

the *Guru*s when they say: "Leave yourself and merge in the *Guru*" refers to this state. In this way, the disciple automatically finds his way to the higher regions.

When one gets the company of the outer *Guru*, he looks one-pointedly at His form and into His eyes, and as a result of the wonderful light and magnetic attraction of the Master he reaches a high degree of concentration. His soul leaves the body easily and rises to inner regions and sees various scenes there. Besides this, there is no other method for easily concentrating and seeing the beautiful sights of the inner regions. *Simran* and contemplation are now complete, and the Music of *Shabd*, which was dimly heard at first, is now clearly heard. It intoxicates the mind and gladdens the soul.

The purpose of *Simran* is to collect the soul behind the eyes so that this earthly vessel, the body, may be vacated at will. The purpose of contemplation is to hold the soul still in the upper regions. This results from fixing the attention on the Radiant Form of the Master. The function of the Divine Melody is to take the soul up to the higher regions.

When a disciple has access to the Radiant Form of the Master, he may consider half the battle as won. After this, the act of rising to higher regions is both easy and joyous. The Master takes the disciple along with Him by the radiance of His Light and the wonderfully sweet Melodies of the Divine Sound. They enter the region of the thousand-petalled lotus, which is in the centre of the Subtle region and is very brilliant. Here they meet innumerable *Rishi*s ऋषि (wise men), *Muni*s मुनि (seers) and *Mahatma*s महात्मा (holy men), who are enjoying the Light of the region. This region has been called by them *Sahasrara* सहस्रार, or the Region of the Thousand Lights. In this region, the Negative Power places certain obstacles in the disciple's way. But the Master removes them and takes the soul across. Guru Nanak has described them in the section of the Aadi Granth called "Characteristics of the Faithful", and Goswami Tulsidas has described them in the 'Ramayana'.

After passing through many other spiritual regions, the Master takes the disciple to *Sach Khand*, the True Region, which is beyond the reach of both the dissolution and the grand dissolution.

This is a very brief account of *Surat-Shabd Yoga*. Only a devoted disciple gets this yoga from a Perfect Master. Through it he reaches his Pristine Home in *Sach Khand*, the True Region.

गुरमुखि महली महलु पछानु।। गुरमुखि सुरति सबदु नीसानु।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (आसा म० 1, पृ० 414)

The devoted disciple realises the Lord in the body; to him the Divine Melody is the Distinguishing Mark of the Lord.

The benefits of practicing *Surat-Shabd Yoga* are very great. The inner Melody and Light appear and one comes to know the True Reality.

सुरति सबदु साखी मेरी सिङी बाजै लोकु सुणे।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (रामकली म० 1, पृ० 877)

Surat-Shabd Yoga bears its own witness. The conch-shell horn is blowing and the devotee hears it.

जोग जुगति गिआन भुगति सुरति सबद तत बेते जपु तपु अखंडली।।
ओति पोति मिलि जोति नानक कछू दुखु न डंडली।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (कलिआन म० 5, पृ० 1322)

The way of yoga, of knowledge, of devotion, of Surat-Shabd, of repetition and austerities – all point to Him. As warp and woof, they lead to Light. O Nanak, the devotees are not subject to pain and sorrow.

All defects, doubts and egotism are destroyed.

करहि बिकार विथार घनेरे सुरति सबद बिनु भरमि पइआ।।
हउमै रोगु महा दुखु लागा गुरमति लेवहु रोगु गइआ।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (रामकली म० 1, पृ० 906)

You commit many misdeeds and sins, and remain in doubt without Surat-Shabd Yoga. Egotism is a deadly disease; only by obeying the Master is it cured.

One gains great happiness through the practice of this *yoga*.

राम नामि मनु बेधिआ अवरु कि करी वीचारु।।
सबद सुरति सुखु उपजै प्रभ रातउ सुख सारु।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (सिरीराग म० 1, पृ० 62)

The Lord's Name pierced my mind; and now I do not need to dwell on anything else. One is happy when the mind is concentrated on the Divine Melody; attuned with the Lord, I am happy.

Those who practice *Surat-Shabd Yoga*, by virtue of the spiritual power of the Divine Melody or *Shabd*, get disentangled from the world, and thus they cross the ocean of the phenomenal universe.

जैसे जल महि कमलु निरालमु मुरगाई नै साणे।।
सुरति सबदि भवसागरु तरीऐ नानक नामु वखाणे।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (रामकली गोसटि म० 1, पृ० 938)

Just as the lotus remains detached from water, just as a duck floats on the water's surface, cross the ocean of existence by means of the Divine Sound O Nanak, praise the Name.

Where there is no *Surat-Shabd Yoga*, the position is just the reverse. One burns in the fire of sorrows, and one's birth in the human form is wasted.

जनमु पदारथु जूऐ हारिआ सबदै सुरति न पाई।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (भैरों म० 3, पृ० 1155)

They do not understand the Surat-Shabd Yoga and lose this precious human life in the gamble.

The gallows of the Angel of Death and the fearful *Chaurasi* चौरासी (The Cycle of Eighty-four lakh Species) is for everyone. One should, therefore, through the practice of *Surat-Shabd Yoga*, make one's life fruitful, for one has obtained birth in the human form only through a great good fortune.

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THE PERFECT MASTER
(*Sant-Satguru* संत–सत्गुरु)

Who is a *Guru* or *Satguru*?

What do we understand by the term '*Guru*', and who is the *Guru*? To know a Master or to understand His real significance or reality is, in fact, very difficult. To do this, discerning eyes, like His own, are necessary. Only a Godman can know a Godman. How can a person, who is confined in the case of the body, realise the Lord's glory? Unless we are as great as He is, we cannot understand Him.

एवडु ऊचा होवै कोइ।। तिसु ऊचे कउ जाणै सोइ।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (जप जी म० 1, पृ० 5)

Only one as Great and as High as God Himself, can know His lofty and exalted state.

Only a swan, flying with other swans, can know them. How can the doves and crows know from which country the swans come and to what land they go? The *Guru*, like that fabled bird, phoenix, which remains always in the sky, does His work on the earth, and then takes flight and returns to the skies.

He is beyond the three bodies (Gross, Subtle and Causal), the three *Guna*s (qualities), the five *Tattwa*s (elements) – Earth, Water, Fire, Air and Ether, and the twenty-five *Prakriti*s (basic elements of material nature); and He is beyond the reach of the mind and *Maya*.

Shams-i-Tabriz says about the Perfect Masters or *Satgurus*:

ईनक आँ मुर्गां किह् ईशां बैज़ाहा ज़र्रीं कुनन्द,
कुर्रा–ए–तंदे–फ़लक रा हर सहर गह ज़ीं कुनन्द।
चूं ब–ताज़न्द आफ़ताबे–हफ़तमीं मैदां शवद,
चूं ब–ख़ुसपन्द आफ़ताबों माह रा बाली कुनन्द।

-- कुल्लियाते-शम्स तब्रेज़ (पृ० 405)

There are birds who lay golden eggs. They fly to the realm of the skies every morning. When they run, they seem like suns in the seventh region. When they sleep, they make the sun and moon their pillows. O Shams, they enable thousands of those born blind, with one kind look, to see the path.

The Perfect Masters are those who have indistinguishably become One with the Lord. They are born in human form, according to the wishes of the Lord, so that they may take souls from the lower regions and unite them with the Lord. They connect with the Lord, those who follow their instructions, and make them like themselves. Actually, they look after the entire universe.

A man standing on the top of the hill can see a fire, whether it be near or far. Similarly, the Perfect Masters find out those that are engaged in selfless service or those that are earnestly seeking God, no matter where they are, whether far or near. They help them and become the means of uniting them with the Lord. It is necessary to have a special receptacle in order to obtain special Grace of the Masters. The receptacle is filled according to the state of its preparedness. The Perfect Masters freely distribute spiritual powers. One can, by their Grace, progress rapidly and unite with the Lord in this very life.

Although the Masters have assumed human forms similar to our own and live amongst us, yet they live with the Lord of all regions and universes. They appear to be bound to earth because of their bodies, but they live beyond the seven skies.

तन मयाने–ख़ल्क़ ओ जां नज़्दे–ख़ुदावँदे जहाँ,
तन गरिफ़्तारे–ज़मीन ओ रूह बर हफ़्त आसमां।

-- दीवाने-ग़रीब नवाज़ (पृ० 175)

Their bodies are in the world, but their souls are with the Lord of the world; their bodies are tied to earth, but their souls are beyond the Seven Skies. (Moin-ud-din Chishti)

Outwardly, they have the human form, but inwardly, they are quite different. Maulana Rumi says,

औलिया रा बर क़यासे–ख़ुद मगीर।
गरचिह् मानद दर नविश्तन शेर ओ शीर।

-- मसनवी मौलाना रूमी (दफ़्तर 1, पृ० 58)

Do not judge the Sants by your intellect. Our words for milk (shir) and tiger (sher) are written in the same way, but in substance they are not the same.

Do not try to judge the *Sant*s by means of your intellect. In Persian, the words 'shir' and 'sher' are written almost alike. But one 'sher' is the tiger which kills and devours, while the other 'shir' is the milk that sustains us.

Similarly, though human beings have similar shapes and forms, they differ in spiritual development. It is the spiritual development, which fulfils the object of human life. It tears off all worldly attachments, destroys all doubts, and the Sustainer of life is attained.

How can we adequately praise the Perfect Master or *Satguru*? He is the ocean of truth and wisdom. He is the embodiment of the Supreme Lord, who has existed from the beginning throughout the ages.

गुरु की महिमा किआ कहा गुरु बिबेक सत सरु।।
ओहु आदि जुगादी जुगह जुगु पूरा परमेसरु।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (आसा म० 5, पृ० 397)

How can the Guru be praised? The Guru is the Ocean of Wisdom. He is from the beginning, throughout the Ages; He is the ever-existing Supreme Lord.

It is impossible to praise the Supreme Lord adequately. The Perfect Master is His manifestation, and it is therefore also impossible, to praise Him adequately. He is like the Lord, beyond the reach of thought, imagination, inference, guess, theory and reasoning. He cannot be seen, heard or described. Book after book can be written and the whole of one's life may be spent in writing, but still one would not be able to describe even one letter relating to His personality.

ऐ बरतर अज़ क़यास ओ ख़यालओ गुमानओ वहम,
वज़ हरचिह् दीदा एम शुनीदेमओ ख़्वान्दा एम।

दफ़्तर तमाम गश्त ब–पायाँ रसीद उमर,
मा हमचुनाँ दर अव्वले–हर्फ़े तु मान्दा एम।

-- नुकाते-दीवाने-शम्स तब्रेज़ (पृ० 30)

You are beyond inference, imagination, probabilities or intellect. You are beyond what I have seen, heard or read. The book is finished and life has drawn to a close. We are still only at the first letter.

The realised ones say that if all the earth were to be used as paper, all the trees as pens and all the seas as ink, we would not be able to describe His virtues. Kabir Sahib says,

सब धरती कागद करूँ, लेखनि सब बनराय।
सात समुँद की मसि करूँ, गुरु गुन लिखा न जाय।।

-- कबीर साखी संग्रह भाग-1 (गुरुदेव का अंग 14, पृ० 2)

If I were to mix all the mountains in the sea to make ink, and were to use the whole earth as paper, I would not be able to describe His Virtues.

The Masters are spiritual Kings. We are beggars, deceived by *Maya* (illusion) of the material world. How can we know their glory? Maulana Rumi says that if he were to praise and glorify the Lord till doomsday, he would not be able to do so.

गर बिगोयम ता क़यामत नअते–ऊ, हेच आँ रा गायतो–मक़तअ व मजू।

-- मसनवी मौलाना रूमी (दफ़्तर 1, पृ० 311)

If I were to describe His Mercy until doomsday, it would be fruitless, for there is no limit and no end to it.

If we were to attempt to describe the Lord, we could only describe Him according to our intellect. If a buffalo were to describe Him, it would describe Him as a great buffalo. What comparison is there between a king and a buffalo? Guru Arjun says,

तू सुलतानु कहा हउ मीआ तेरी कवन वडाई।
जो तू देहि सु कहा सुआमी मै मूरख कहणु न जाई।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (बिलावल म० 1, पृ० 795)

You are the Emperor, and if I call You a Chieftain, how does this add to Your greatness? As you permit me, I praise You, O Lord and Master, I am ignorant, and I cannot chant Your Praises.

If a small child were to stand before his mother and say, "Mother, I know you", how imperfect would his understanding of his mother be? Similarly, how can we sing the praises of the *Guru*? Our praises would be so imperfect.

It is fortunate that whenever such Perfect Masters appear, they themselves give out a few hints regarding their true nature. For it is certain that unless they themselves reveal themselves, the human beings, who are spiritually asleep and under the sway of attachment and *Maya*, would not know them.

Let us, then, ask them what the Perfect Master or *Guru* is, and who He is? They say:

- *Shabd* or Divine Music is the Perfect Master.

Shabd is indistinguishable from the Supreme Lord. It is a conscious current of that Great Power, which created the universe and which fully pervades it. All the universe emanated from this *Shabd*.

तेरा कवणु गुरू जिस का तू चेला।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (रामकली म० 1, पृ० 942)

Who is your Guru, of whom are you the disciple?

सबदु गुरू सुरति धुनि चेला।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (रामकली म० 1, पृ० 943)

Shabd is the Guru, and the soul is the disciple.

सबदु गुर पीरा गहिर गंभीरा बिनु सबदै जगु बउरानं।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (सोरठ म० 1, पृ० 635)

Shabd is the Guru, the ancient, the deep. The world would be a madhouse without Shabd.

बाणी गुरू गुरू है बाणी विचि बाणी अंमृतु सारे।।

गुरु बाणी कहै सेवकु जनु मानै परतखि गुरू निसतारे।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (नट म० 4, पृ० 982)

The Word is the Guru, the Guru is the Word; in the Word is the Nectar, which the Guru says we must accept. The Guru manifests Himself and redeems His disciples.

Tulsi Sahib says,

सुरति सिष्य सब्दै गुरू, मिलि मारग जाना हो।
लख आकास औंधा कूआँ, ता मैं सुरति समाना हो।

-- घट रामायण भाग-2 (पृ० 176)

The soul, the disciple, and Shabd, the Guru, travel together on the path. There is an Inverted Well in the Sky, the soul becomes absorbed in it.

Bhai Gurdas says,

सबद गुरु गुरु जाणीऐ गुरमुखि होइ सुरति धुनि चेला।।

-- भाई गुरदास, वारां गिआन रतनावली (7:20)

Know Shabd to be the Guru – your Guru will reveal this. Become the beloved disciple. The soul will follow the Melody.

Kabir Sahib is asked,

गुरु तुम्हारा कहां है, चेला कहां रहाय।।
क्यों करके मिलना भया, क्यों बिछड़े आवे जाय।।

Where is your Guru? Where does the disciple live? How do the two happen to meet? When do the two separate? How do they come and go? (Kabir)

He replies,

गुरु हमारा गगन महं, चेला है घट माहे।।
सुरत शबद मिलना भया, बिछुड़त कबहूं नाहे।।

-- कबीर साखी संग्रह भाग-1 (गुरुदेव का अंग 57, 58, पृ० 6)

The Guru is in the Sky. The Disciple is in the heart. The soul meets Shabd. Then they never separate. Accept Shabd as the Guru. (Kabir)

Most *Guru*s are false; they seek their personal ends, and wander about for self-gratification. *Shabd* is the *Guru* of the entire universe.

Those in whom *Shabd Guru* is manifest are indistinguishable from *Shabd*. He alone is a *Sant* or Perfect Master, who can initiate others. *Shabd* is a manifestation of the Supreme Lord, and it is revealed to the *Sant*s or Perfect Masters. They are indistinguishable from the Lord.

समुंदु विरोलि सरीरु हम देखिआ इक वसतु अनूप दिखाई।।
गुर गोविंदु गोविंदु गुरू है नानक भेदु न भाई।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (आसा म० 4, पृ० 442)

I churned the Sea of the Body, and saw a wonderful sight. The Lord is the Guru, and the Guru is the Lord; O Nanak, there is no difference between the two.

One, who practices *Shabd*, is a Perfect Master or Perfect *Guru* (*Poora Guru*). This is evident if we consider the word, *Guru* etymologically. '*Guru*' is a Sanskrit word. It comes from the root '*Gri* गृ', which means to call or speak or utter a sound. One who bestows *Shabd*, one who practices the Divine Sound of *Shabd* or is connected with *Shabd*, is a Perfect *Guru*.

The *Guru*s have described the Perfect *Guru* in this way and have emphasized the necessity of taking shelter with such a one.

सो गुरु करउ जि साचु दृड़ावै।। अकथु कथावै सबदि मिलावै।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (धनासरी म० 1, पृ० 686)

He instills Truth in your mind; accept Him as your Guru. The Unutterable, He makes you utter; He unites you with the Divine Sound.

नानक साचे कउ सचु जाणु।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (सिरीराग म० 1, पृ० 15)

O Nanak, know the Truth to be the True One.

He is unutterable, but He makes us experience Him. He connects us with *Shabd*. Kabir Sahib says that he, who makes us see the invisible, is a *Sant* or *Satguru*.

भाई रे सोई सतिगुर संत कहावे। नैनन अलख लखावै।।

-- कबीर शब्दावली भाग-1 (सतगुरु और संत की महिमा 5, पृ० 3)

O brother, He is a Sant-Satguru, who makes us see the Invisible.

The Perfect *Guru* makes us hear the Divine Melody of *Shabd*.

सतिगुरू पूरा साचु दृडाए।। सचै सबदि सदा गुण गाए।।
गुणदाता वरतै सभ अंतरि सिरि सिरि लिखदा साहा हे।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (मारू म० 3, पृ० 1055)

The Perfect Guru implants Truth within us. Through Shabd, we sing His Glorious Praises forever. The Giver of virtue pervades deep within the nucleus of all beings. He inscribes the mark of destiny upon each and every person's head.

Kabir Sahib also says the same thing:

साध साधु सबही बडे, अपनी अपनी ठौर।।
सबद बिबेकी पारखी, ते माथे के मौर।।

-- कबीर साखी संग्रह भाग-2 (साध का अंग 29, पृ० 127)

In their own spheres, all are great holy men. But he who has realised Shabd, he is the greatest of all.

गुरू गुरू महि भेद है गुरू गुरू महि भाव।।
सोई गुरू नित बंदीए जो सबद बतावे दाव।।

-- कबीर समग्र भाग-1 (सुमिरण कौ अंग पृ० 226)

There are various Gurus, and there are differences in their approach. Worship that Guru alone, who connects you to Shabd.

Tulsi Sahib has also given the same definition of a True *Guru*.

सबद भेद साखी लखे, सोइ संत सुजाना हो।
अगम निगम को चीन्ह कै, बानी पहिचाना हो।

-- घट रामायण भाग-2 (पृ० 176)

He who knows the different Divine Sounds, He is indeed a great Sant. He knows the Unknowable, He knows the Word.

The Perfect Master or *Guru* is similarly described in the 'Saar Bachan':

गुरु सोई जो शब्द सनेही। शब्द बिना दूसर नहिं सेई।।
शब्द कमावे सो गुरु पूरा। उन चरनन की हो जा धूरा।।

-- सार-बचन छंद बंद (13:1:1-2, पृ० 105)

He alone is the Guru, who loves Shabd. He who knows It not, is not a Perfect Guru. He who practices Shabd, is a Perfect Guru. Bow before such a Guru. Become the Dust of His feet.

The Perfect Master or *Satguru* is the true physician, for He has the life-giving herb of the Name or *Shabd*. The *Satguru* is the custodian of *Shabd*, and it is *Shabd* that takes the soul to its source. It is described as the 'Voice of the Silence' in Theosophy, and it resounds in all the universes and regions.

The *Sant*s, in their hymns, consider one, who practices listening to the Divine Sound to be a True *Guru*. One cannot obtain true initiation except from such a *Sant*. When the disciple's efforts bear fruit, he realises *Shabd* and merges in the Lord, the source of the current.

सबदि मिलहि ता हरि मिलै सेवा पवै सभ थाइ।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (सिरीराग म० 3, पृ० 27)

Realise Shabd and meet the Lord; your Service will then be accepted.

The Lord Himself, as *Shabd*, pervades the *Guru* and showers *Shabd* through Him.

गुर महि आपु समोइ सबदु वरताइआ।। सचे ही पतीआइ सचि समाइआ।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (मलार की वार म० 1, पृ० 1279)

He Himself pervades the Guru; He pervades as Shabd. He who loves the True One, merges in the True One.

- The True *Guru* is Merged in *Shabd*

नानक आदि अंगद अमर सतिगुर सबदि समाइअउ।।

धनु धन्नु गुरू रामदास गुरु जिनि पारसु परसि मिलाइअउ।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (सवैये म० 5, पृ० 1407)

All the True Gurus were merged in Shabd of Satguru; Nanak, Angad and Amardas, thrice blessed is Guru Ramdas.His Guru connected Him with the Divine Touchstone.

The Word was made flesh and dwelt amongst us. (John 1:14)

All true devotees get *Shabd*, which is real life, from the Perfect *Guru*. He is life in himself, and since He is free from ego, *Shabd* speaks through Him. He has transcended the valley of death. He has realised the life of the Lord, which works through the Sound, and He himself can give that life or spiritual awakening to His disciples.

The soul is entangled in the inertness of Maya or illusion. In order to free it, it is necessary to breathe Shabd into it, so that what is hidden may manifest itself. This cannot be accomplished by anyone except a Perfect Master or *Guru*. The enlightened ones say that it is only the Perfect *Guru*, who can establish contact with the Sound.

पराई अमाण किउ रखीऐ दिती ही सुखु होइ।।

गुर का सबदु गुर थै टिकै होर थै परगटु न होइ।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (सारंग की वार म० 3, पृ० 1249)

That which is on trust, should be returned; happiness lies in doing so. Shabd of the Guru is established only in the Guru; It cannot be manifested through anyone else.

The realisation of the Divine Sound is the holy gift of the Perfect *Guru*. The realisation is not the result of one's own effort. How can hearing of *Shabd*, which is limitless, be the result of one's own limited efforts? It is beyond such limits. When the unsophisticated, simple child begins to creep towards its mother, the mother lifts the child up.

घाल न मिलिओ सेव न मिलिओ मिलिओ आइ अचिंता।।
जा कउ दइआ करी मेरै ठाकुरि तिनि गुरहि कमानो मंता।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (धनासरी म० 5, पृ० 672)

The Lord is not attained by effort; He is not attained by service. He meets one of His own accord. He, to whom He is kind, meets a perfect Guru, and practices His Mantra.

This does not mean that a disciple should not make an effort. He should practice his meditation, as directed by the *Guru*. But he attains results only according to his *Guru*'s Mercy and Grace.

जिन कंउ सतिगुरु भेटिआ से हरि कीरति सदा कमाहि।।
अचिंतु हरि नामु तिन कै मनि वसिआ सचै सबदि समाहि।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (वडहंस की वार म० 3, पृ० 592)

He who meets a Satguru, always sings the praises of the Lord. The Name pervades his heart, and he merges in Shabd.

The unending music of *Shabd* or *Naam* is within us, but we cannot get it without the help of a *Sant*, for the Lord has given the key to the *Sant*s.

अनहद बाणी पूंजी।। संतन हथि राखी कूंजी।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (रामकली म० 5, पृ० 893)

The Unending Music is the Treasure; the Sants have the key to it.

बिनु गुर नामु न पाइआ जाइ।। सिध साधिक रहे बिललाइ।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (माझ म० 1, पृ० 115)

Without a Guru the Name cannot be attained; both the seekers and the adepts have been waiting in vain.

The lives of the Perfect Masters are sustained by *Shabd*, which sustains their *Prana*s (life-energy) also. The Perfect

Masters swim in the waters of Spirituality and give us life by making us also bathe in them. They are enlightened, and they have experienced the son-ship of the Lord. Jesus Christ, for example, said,

I am the son of God. (St. John 11:36)

The *Gurus* say that the Lord does what the *Sants* request Him to do.

हरि सो किछु करे जि हरि किआ संता भावै।।
कीता लोड़नि सोई कराइनि दरि फेरु न कोई पाइदा।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (मारू म० 5, पृ० 1076)

The Lord does that, which pleases the Sants of the Lord. He does whatever they wish to be done, nothing blocks their way at His Door.

Maulana Rumi says that *Sants* have been given power by the Lord even to call back an arrow from its flight.

औलिया रा हस्त कुदरत अज़ इलाह, तीर जस्ता बाज़ आरन्दश ज़ राह।

-- मसनवी मौलाना रूमी (दफ़्तर 1, पृ० 189)

The Sants have been empowered by the Lord; they can even bring the arrow back from its flight. (Maulana Rumi)

Are *Sants* the rivals of God? No, never. Actually, the Lord is captivated by the *Sants*, for they hold Him in bondage by their love for Him. Whatever the Lord wishes to do, He does through His *Sants*. In this universe, the *Sants* are His agents or officers and do His work. Paltu Sahib says that in His household, there are no other managers. All *Sants* are lovers of the Name. Whatever they wish, comes to pass.

पलटू घर में राम के, और ना करता कोय।
नाम समीपी संत हैं, वे जो करें सो होय।।

-- पलटू साहिब की बानी भाग-1 (कुण्डली 25, पृ० 10)

O Paltu, in the House of the Lord, there is no other manager. The Sants are lovers of God; whatever they wish, comes to pass.

The *Gurus* describe the *Sants* as "child-like" and "indifferent". Maulana Rumi also says that the *Sants* and *Mahatmas* are the children of God. They know this relationship and know their rights as children. They partake of all His virtues.

Maulana Rumi says,

औलिया अतफ़ाले–हक़ अन्द ऐ पिसर, ग़ायबी ओ हाज़िरी बस बा ख़बर।

-- मसनवी मौलाना रूमी (दफ़्तर 3, पृ० 22)

O son, the Sants are the children of God, in sight or out of sight, they are always in His mind.

All Perfect *Sant*s are the children of God. Everything–whether manifest or not, is known to them. God speaks through them.

जैसी मै आवै खसम की बाणी तैसड़ा करी गिआनु वे लालो।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (तिलंग म० 1, पृ० 722)

O Lalu, know you this: Whatever He wishes, I say unto you.

In this physical universe, the *Sant*s are the redeemers of human beings. The living *Guru* is the hope of the people, the Light of the world and the Saviour of Humankind. Because of the Grace of *Shabd*, the *Sant* or Perfect Master is free from all limitations and bondage. He takes souls out of the stormy sea of birth and death and takes them to the immortal regions. *Shabd* and the Perfect *Guru* are indistinguishable. The *Guru*, in His outward form, has a human body. He teaches and persuades those, who come to hear Him. But when you go to the subtle regions, He assumes a subtle form and accompanies you in that form. If you reach the causal region, the second spiritual region, He assumes a causal form and in that form He helps you there. He has travelled through all the stages of the journey to the highest regions and can help you in those regions also. He does not rest until He merges you in His real form, *Shabd*.

- He who has Realised the True Being is a Perfect Master or *Guru*.

He has transcended both the dissolution and the grand dissolution. He has the power to take others to the highest region. It is only by remaining in the company of such *Sant*s that one can be redeemed.

सति पुरखु जिनि जानिआ सतिगुरु तिस का नाउ।।
तिस कै संगि सिखु उधरै नानक हरि गुन गाउ।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (गउड़ी सुखमनी म० 5, पृ० 286)

The One who knows the True Lord, is called the True Guru. In His Company, by singing the Glorious Praises of the Lord, the Sikh is saved, O Nanak.

The different kinds of Master or *Guru.*

There are four *Guru*s, namely: the mother, the father, the teacher and the *Satguru*. Of these, the *Satguru* is the True *Guru*, and His relationship is wholly spiritual. A worldly religious *Guru* is called an *Acharya* आचार्य or teacher, and he gives social, ethical and religious teachings. This class of *Guru*s or teachers includes the academic teachers also.

The *Sant-Satguru* संत–सत्गुरु or *Sant* is called the *Satguru*. He has an entirely spiritual relationship with the disciple. He imparts spiritual teachings only.

According to the stage to which they have ascended in the spiritual regions, *Guru*s can be divided into three classes:

- ***Sadh-Guru*** साध–गुरु;
- ***Sant-Guru*** संत–गुरु;
- ***Param Sant-Guru*** परम संत–गुरु.

A *Sadh-Guru* is a holy man who has risen above the region of *Trikuti* त्रिकुटी or *Onkar* ओंकार, to that, which Muslims call '*Lahut*'. This is the third region above the physical universe. According to the Muslim Sufis, he is one who has reached the region of '*Hu*', has wiped away all the dirt covering the soul and has removed the covers of the three attributes or *Gunas*, the five elements, the twenty-five natures, and the mind and *Maya*, all of which cover or hide the soul.

साध की उपमा तिहु गुण ते दूरि।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (गउड़ी सुखमनी म० 5, पृ० 272)

A Sadh is devoid of the three Gunas.

He has recognised himself to be a particle of the Supreme Lord, and he tries to merge in Him.

A *Sant-Guru* or Master is one who has attained the *Sach Khand*, True Region, which is beyond the dissolution and the grand dissolution.

Param Sant-Gurus are those who have reached the region of *Anaami* अनामी (Indescribable or Nameless), or *Nirala* निराला (Unique), or *Maha Dayal* महा–दयाल (Most Merciful), or *Soami* सोआमी (Lord) and have become One with the Supreme Being. There isn't a great deal of difference between a *Sant* संत and a *Param Sant* परम–संत. One who has reached the True Region, *Sach Khand* has crossed all the lower regions. This difference is pointed out for academic purposes only. Only those who have been given the authority of initiating the seekers by the Lord, are Perfect Masters or *Guru*s. If the Lord authorizes one who has reached the *Sadh Gati* (status of *Sadh*) or *Sant Gati* (status of *Sant*) or *Param Sant Gati (Status of Param Sant)* to be a *Guru*, he is called a *Sadh-Guru, Sant-Guru* or *Param Sant-Guru*. There can be many *Sadh*s, *Sant*s or *Param Sant*s, but the Lord only rarely nominates any one as a Perfect Master or *Guru* Authoritative to initiate. All Perfect Masters are *Sant*s, but all *Sant*s are not *Guru*s. There are many graduates or holders of the Master of Arts degree, but only a few of them are professors. Similarly, all those who seek Spirituality do not become *Guru*s. Actually, it is only rarely that one becomes a *Guru*.

The Perfect Masters or *Sant*s, also called *Guru*s, are regents or viceroys of the Supreme Lord. They are of two kinds. First, there are *Swatah Sant-Guru*s in their own right. They are born *Sant*s who come direct from the highest spiritual region, such as Kabir Sahib, Guru Nanak Sahib and others, all of whom taught the true spiritual path from an early age. They always remain connected with the Lord. Whenever such *Sant*s come into the world they start a wave of Spirituality. Then there are others who succeed them and continue their teachings. After some generations, this work slowly decreases and dies out. Then another *Sant* comes and starts the wave again. These *Sant*s may come anywhere and in any nation.

The second kind of *Sant*s are those who are not born as *Sant*s but who have practiced spiritual meditation in this world. They have the necessary ability, and have been commissioned by the Lord to do the work of a *Guru*. Even they are not brought up to Mastership here. They come here already perfected. For name's sake only, they appear to attain completeness and perfection in this life.

The first kind of *Sant* is described as follows by Kabir Sahib:

कह कबीर हम धुर के भेदी लाए हुकम हजूरी।।

-- संत कबीर

O Kabir, We are familiar with the secret of the Lord's Mansion; We have come here, as ordered.

Bhai Gurdas says,

पहिलां बाबे पाया बख़श दर पिच्छों दे फिरि घाल कमाई।।

-- भाई गुरदास, वारां गिआन रतनावली (1:24)

The Baba (Nanak Dev) was born with the Gift; thereafter He practiced it assiduously.

The first kind of *Sant* gets an order from the Supreme Lord to go forth as a *Guru*, and He then takes birth; while the second kind receives the order to act as a *Guru* after he has been born.

There is no difference in their spiritual powers or work. Both kinds of *Sant*s possess full powers and use them when necessary.

Besides these two kinds of Perfect Masters or *Guru*s, all others, who work as *Guru*s, are merely imposters. Many of them are selfish and proud and are worshippers of *Maya*, illusion. They use their knowledge as a tool and use the seekers after Spirituality as their beasts of burden. Narrow- mindedness and religious prejudices are the results of their teachings. *Guru*s of this kind are dangerous. By their wilful and harmful actions, they give a bad name to the institution of a Perfect *Guru* – the glorious, unimpeachable and spotless Power.

Is there One *Guru* or are there many?

The Word is the Master of the entire universe, and the soul the disciple, which, having merged in it, becomes indistinguishable from it. In the sphere of unity and oneness, He in the form of the Word is the *Guru* of all the universe, but in the sphere of plurality, it is the person in whom the Word is manifest and who is granted the status of a Master that acts as a *Guru*.

The story of how Guru Nanak, while in the state of deep meditation in the bed of the Kali Veni काली वेणी river (a large rain-water drain), was Authoritative to act as a *Guru* by the Supreme Being, is well known.

पहिलां बाबे पाइआ बख़श दर पिछों दे फिरि घाल कमाई।।

-- भाई गुरदास, वारां गिआन रतनावली (1:24)

Baba Guru Nanak was born with the gift; thereafter he practiced it assiduously.

ढाढी सचै महलि खसमि बुलाइआ।। सची सिफति सालाह कपडा पाइआ।। सचा अंमृत नामु भोजनु आइआ।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (माझ म० 1, पृ० 150)

My Lord and Master has summoned me, His minstrel, to the True Mansion of His Presence. He has dressed me in the Robes of His True Praise and Glory. The ambrosial Nectar of the True Name has become my food.

Both Kabir Sahib and Guru Nanak Sahib were Great Masters. According to history, Kabir Sahib was born in 1398 CE on a full moon day near Banaras and his Light merged in the Eternal Light in 1518 CE. Guru Nanak incarnated in 1469 CE at Talwandi in the Punjab and his Light merged in the Eternal Light in 1539 CE at Kartarpur. This means that Kabir Sahib manifested 71 years before Guru Nanak Sahib and that they were contemporaries from1469 CE to 1518 CE. Both of them taught the True Spiritual Path of *Surat-Shabd Yoga*.

Similarly, Shams-i-Tabriz and Maulana Rumi were contemporaries in Persia from 1207 CE to 1247 CE. Guru Angad Sahib and Dadu Sahib were contemporaries from 1504 CE to 1552 CE. Two other Great *Sant*s, Guru Arjan and Dha-

ram Das, were also contemporaries from 1561 CE to 1606 CE.

It can be seen, therefore, that there can be several Perfect *Guru*s functioning at the same time. But for a person who wishes to become a *Gurumukh* or a beloved disciple, he must have one *Guru* only, just as a chaste woman has one husband only and remembers and thinks of him alone. A woman visited by a number of persons is a prostitute.

यके दां व यके वीं ब यके गोए। यके ख्वांहां व यके चीं व यके जोए।

Know the One, see the One, praise the One; believe in One, select One, and seek the One.

A disciple should have one Master only. The disciple should continue to contemplate on the Form of the Master who initiated him even after the latter leaves this world, and he will succeed. The Master, when He initiates a disciple, takes His stand by him. He dwells in his heart. He is the ideal. The disciple will succeed because of this fact. He will gain inner experience; he will lack nothing. A Master never dies; He is imperishable. He is a principle or an ideal, which never dies. He merely gives up the body. A disciple may serve and live in the company of another holy man. He should, however, maintain internal connection with the *Guru*, from whom he received initiation, and always fix his attention on His Form. He is present in his heart and will look after every one of His disciples. If one were to shift from one Master to another, he would never gain anything.

The Master or *Guru* of the Time.

The *Guru* of the time is the *Guru* with whom the disciple has a living connection. *Guru*s of the past are no longer *Guru*s, because they are not living.

Both are necessary in their own spheres. By reading the history of the past *Guru*s and their beautiful hymns, we can realise the necessity of a living *Guru* and to some extent we understand His mission. The real benefit of Spirituality,

however, can only be had from the *Guru* of the time or the living *Guru*. The *Guru*, who initiates a person, is his present *Guru* or *Guru* of the time.

Even if there be more than one *Guru* at one and the same time, a disciple should have one *Guru* only, just as a woman should have one husband only. Contemporaneous *Guru*s fill their respective disciples with their own higher consciousness. One cannot gain emancipation without this. *Guru*s stress the need for this again and again. Maulana Rumi says,

मगिसल अज़ पैग़म्बरे–अय्यामे–ख़्वेश,
तकिया कम कुन बर फ़नो ओ बर गामे–ख़्वेश।

-- मसनवी मौलाना रूमी (दफ़्तर 4, पृ० 63)

Do not turn away from the Prophet of your own time; do not rely on your own self and your own efforts.

Every Prophet of God emphasizes the necessity of seeking the Master of the time. He who has not, after due deliberation, searched for the Master of his time (in other words, has not received initiation from the Master of the time) who is the Regent and Viceroy of God and is a Perfect *Guru*, will remain lacking in true Spirituality. If we do not find the living Master, we will remain deprived of true Spirituality. For this reason Maulana Rumi advises that one should follow Moses (the living Master) and God, and should not let pride harm his soul.

दर ख़ुदाए मूसा ओ मूसा गरेज़, आबे–ईमां रा ज़ फ़िरऔनी मरेज़।

-- मसनवी मौलाना रूमी (दफ़्तर 1, पृ० 107)

Believe in the God of Moses and the Master. Let not your pride undermine your faith.

True devotion does not grow without a Master of the time. When we have not seen the Lord or enjoyed His company, how can we love Him? Without love and devotion we cannot reach the True Region.

Some persons think that the teaching in the Aadi Granth about the necessity of a living Master held good during the lifetime of the Sikh Gurus only. This matter deserves serious consideration. The advice of the Perfect Masters or *Sant*s is

for the entire world and for all times, and not for a specific period.

परथाइ साखी महा पुरख बोलदे साझी सगल जहानै।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (सोरठ की वार म० 3, पृ० 647)

Great Sants speak the eternal Truth, for all the world, for all the Ages.

The command of an emperor is as good as the emperor. This command stresses the need for a living *Guru*.

बाणी गुरू गुरू है बाणी विचि बाणी अंमृतु सारे।।
गुरु बाणी कहै सेवकु जनु मानै परतखि गुरू निसतारे।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (नट म० 4, पृ० 982)

The Word is the Guru, and the Guru is the Word; the Divine Nectar is in the Word. O seekers, obey the words of the Gurus; the living Guru grants release.

Bhai Gurdas comments as follows:

बेद ग्रंथ गुरु हट है, जिस लग भवजल पार उतारा।।
सतिगुर बाझ न बुझीऐ जिच्चर धरे न प्रभु अवतारा।।

-- भाई गुरदास, वारां गिआन रतनावली (1:17)

The Vedas and other scriptures are the shop of the Master, which enable a man to cross the Ocean of the World. The Reality cannot be understood without a Master. The Lord incarnates as the Master and makes us understand.

The inner secrets cannot be expressed in words, either spoken or written. They can be explained only by the Perfect Master of the time. He accompanies a disciple on his spiritual ascent and takes him across all the difficult stages of the journey.

बिखड़े दाउ लंघावै मेरा सतिगुरु सुख सहज सेती घरि जाते।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (बसंत हिंडोल म० 5, पृ० 1185)

My True Master will assist you, in overcoming all the difficulties; you shall reach your True Home in celestial peace and poise.

This work cannot be done by a *Guru*, who lived in past ages. The formless *Shabd* takes form. *Shabd* must take form. Incarnations have form. Perfect Masters are incarnations of the Supreme Being, the Timeless One. They are called *Guru Avatar*s or Masters incarnate (also called *Nitya Avatar*s –

'ever-present' *Avatar*s on earth, as against *Nimitta Avatar*s – 'limited' *Avatar*s of *Kaal Purush*, who come only once in a while). *Guru Avatar*s are human in form. Bhai Gurdas says that without a Master-incarnate, no one can know the Lord.

Without the teachings and help of a living *Guru*, the inner secrets of the path to the highest region cannot be known. Initiation is necessary to obtain knowledge of this path. Reading the Vedas and Shastras is not sufficient.

From the history of the Sikhs, it appears that the Aadi Granth, the holy book of the Sikhs, was compiled during the time of Guru Arjan. Side by side with the doctrine of the Word of the *Guru*, or the Word personified in the form of the *Guru*, there have been living *Guru*s in human form who have bestowed initiation. Up to this very day, the *Khalsa*s or Pure Ones who have the inner Light, have this right to bestow initiation.

पूरन जोत जगै घट मै तब खालस ताहि नखालस जानै।।

-- दसम ग्रन्थ (33 सवैये पृ० 712)

When full Light appears in the heart, the Khalsas (pure ones) then know the Most Pure One.

The necessity for the Living *Guru.*

The formless Lord pervades everywhere, but in spite of this, unless we become directly connected with Him, we do not receive any virtue from Him. Electricity is present everywhere, but we cannot derive any light or other benefits from it, unless we know the location of the switch. Even if we know this, it is of no use, unless there is a light bulb properly connected with the switch. When the connection is made, electricity does its proper work. It lights our dark house. It alleviates the heat of summer by operating fans. It cooks food for us. It runs our factories.

Similarly, if we are connected with the Lord, our actions will bear fruit. The Perfect Master is the Lord in human form. He is *Shabd*-personified, "the Word-made-flesh." Unless we

are familiar with the human Master, how can we realise His subtle form, which is *Shabd*? *Shabd* and the Perfect Master are the two means of taking the soul to its original Home. No one, but the Master, can reveal the secrets of Reality, and without Him, no one can gain release from the bondage of mind and *Maya*. No one can meet the Lord except through *Shabd*, and it is only the *Satguru*, who can connect the soul with *Shabd*. This is the only purpose of their manifestation in this world.

The Word was made flesh and dwelt amongst us. (Bible, John 1:14)

The Perfect Master or *Satguru* has a very clear inner vision and can at once see who is fit for this Path. Those that are ready, are accepted. He, in His Grace, chooses them and makes them followers of the Truth.

When the disciple is ready, the Guru appears.

When our soul grows weary in its search for the Lord, and is anxious to return to its home, when our eyes long to see the Lord and we hunger for Him, then, in order to fulfil our intense desire, He incarnates as a Perfect Master or *Satguru* or *Sant-Satguru*. In order to release the seekers from their bonds, He himself comes as a redeemer. He gives the seekers instructions according to their development, and connects them with the Lord.

The secrets of Spirituality, or of the practical means by which the soul can become united with the Lord, are given out by the living Master only. This teaching is imparted through an unspoken language. There is no spoken language by means of which it can be imparted.

Religious books merely give a few hints about the ascent to the spiritual regions. The scenes witnessed by the soul with the help of the Master in the subtle regions cannot be fully described. The books, being inanimate, cannot help the soul in its ascent. In the writings of the *Sant*s, there is a reference to internal experiences. The bliss of these experiences can be had by internal progress and not otherwise. It can be achieved through the *Satguru* only. It cannot be

had by reasoning. Holy books and Scriptures describe it to a certain extent only; but it cannot be experienced except through the living Master.

Past *Sant*s.

A patient cannot take medicine from a past physician, however proficient he may have been. No one can get his case decided by a past judge. No woman can marry a dead person and beget children of him. Similarly, Perfect *Mahatma*s came in their own time, and redeemed those who came in contact with them then. After the expiration of their period, they left the world and merged in the Lord. Before departing, they passed on their work to others. Only man can make another man understand. This is the law of nature. The Lord works in this world of matter through living persons.

Many believe that past *Mahatma*s (Great Souls) are even now present in the spiritual regions and can help us. This matter should be considered calmly. Those Perfect Masters fulfilled their mission and merged in the Lord and left the remaining work to some other *Mahatma*s. One *Mahatma* finished His work and handed over the office of *Guru* to another, according to the direction of the Lord, so that the work of connecting the souls with the Lord and redeeming them could continue. Even if a past *Mahatma* wished to redeem a person, He would work in accordance with the law of nature and carry out His mission through a living *Mahatma*.

We can take the help of past Masters only after ascending to the regions where they are. We are, however, in this gross world, while they are in the world of the spirit. If we think that past *Mahatma*s can help us from the spiritual regions, we are acting on inner feelings, imagination and inferences. And unless our inner eyes are opened, we are unable to be certain whether our inner thoughts are from the Lord, from a past *Mahatma*, from some imperfect soul,

or if they are only waves of our own subconscious mind. It is wrong to act on the waves of the subconscious mind, and one is likely to be misled by them. Moreover, when we have not seen a past *Mahatma*, the anti-power or any other soul can claim to be that *Mahatma* and deceive us. As we cannot positively recognise Him, we are likely to be deceived.

Let us consider whether it is logical to think that past *Mahatma*s can act as *Guru*s and that it is not necessary to have a living *Guru*. If a past *Mahatma* can do so, surely the Lord Himself could give the necessary spiritual instructions. Then why did any *Mahatma* have to come here at all, as the Lord could always do so?

If, however, there was a necessity for a *Mahatma* at any time in the past, it follows that there is a necessity for one even now, just as there was before.

If the Lord wishes to make people understand, He must take human form. This is the law of nature. He has to take the form of a *Sant* or a Holy Man.

साध रूप अपना तनु धारिआ।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (मारू म० 5, पृ० 1005)

The Holy Sant is the very embodiment of the Lord's Form.

हमरो भरता बड़ो बिबेकी आपे संतु कहावै।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (आसा भगत कबीर, पृ० 476)

The Lord showed great wisdom and took the Form of a Sant.

This does not mean that the past *Mahatma*s are dead. No, they are immortal and have crossed the Gross, Subtle and Causal regions. They are united with the Lord and are indistinguishable from Him. If they are supposed to be wandering in the lower regions, what was the use of their perfecting the practice of listening to *Shabd*?

It is no use getting entangled in long intellectual arguments. It does not help or carry us forward. Seek the guidance of a living *Mahatma*, who can tell you the natural and easy method of uniting with the Lord. You need not wait for another life after you die here. If you try, you can succeed here and in this very life.

Complete and imperishable spiritual success can be had from a living *Guru* only. There is a dynamic power of higher consciousness in Him. His touch charges us and connects us with the current of *Shabd*, and He helps us in the higher spiritual regions by accompanying us. That soul is indeed blessed, which takes shelter with such a *Mahatma*.

It is obvious that if, for instance, we had to visit London, we would first consult a directory to find where it is situated and the route we should follow, where we would have to change and at which port we would have to embark, and to which company the ship belongs. We would have to obtain a passport, for if we did not have a passport, we could not start our journey. Similarly, we have to obtain a "permit" from a *Sant*, the Deputy of the Lord, to enter the realm of the Lord. This passport or permit is initiation. One has to have the permit stamped with the seal of the *Satguru*, this fact has been mentioned by various *Mahatma*s in their hymns. Their writ runs throughout all the universes and regions since they are the duly appointed Deputies of the Lord. When we get their passport, no one can obstruct us in any of the universes or regions. *Sant*s say if the seed of *Naam* is sown in any heart, it will certainly sprout and the initiate will certainly reach his original Home.

In addition to obtaining the information and papers needed for the journey, the other necessary measure to adopt is to follow the right path leading to your destination. If the right road leads to the north and one walks towards the south, one cannot reach the destination, however enthusiastic he may be. He will only go further away from his destination. It is, therefore, necessary to follow the right path.

When making preparations for a journey, we consult various directories. But if someone tells us about a person, who has already visited the place and the country to which we want to go, we would not only consult the directories, but would also consult that person, because he has seen and known everything for himself. If, on contacting him, we

learn that he is again visiting that country and is willing to take us along with him, we would gladly accompany him. We can, to some extent, check his facts with those given in the directories. If the facts and directions are corroborated by several directories, we are all the more satisfied. The souls of the *Sant*s visit the spiritual universes and regions. They can therefore, give us the information needed for our own journey to those regions.

गुरमुखि आवै जाइ निसंगु।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (रामकली म० 1, पृ० 932)

A Gurumukh comes and goes at will.

Religious books are like directories. They simply point out the way. The *Sant*s-incarnate take us to the higher regions in the ship of *Naam*. We can obtain tickets or passports from them and cross in their ship of *Naam* or *Shabd*. They are themselves the captains. We can thus reach the region of the Lord.

It is good to study religious books, but the power that takes us across is *Naam* or *Shabd*, without which it is not possible to reach the region of the Lord. If we simply make enquiries and take no step forward on that path, we cannot reach the country of the Beloved. Bhai Gurdas says,

पूछत पथकि तिह मारग न धारै पगु।।
प्रीतम कै देस कैसे बातन कै जाईऐ।।

-- भाई गुरदास, कवित्त सवैये (439)

The traveller enquires about the Right Path, but walks not on it.
How can he reach the land of the Beloved by mere talk?

To try to walk on that path by oneself results in being led astray, and one has to repent for this mistake. If one has the Master by one's side, one can easily reach the Home of the Lord and become intoxicated with its bliss. If it had been in our own power to go back, we would not have remained separated from the Lord.

आपण लीआ जे मिलै विछुड़ि किउ रोवंनि।।
साधू संगु परापते नानक रंग माणंनि।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (माझ बारहमाहा म० 5, पृ० 134)

If we could meet Him by our own effort, we would not linger here to grieve in separation. Let us then find the company of a Holy Man, O Nanak, and rejoice in His Royal Glory.

If something that we want is at one place and we search for it at another, how can we ever find it? But if we take with us someone who knows the secret, we can certainly find it. The path which would otherwise take innumerable lives to cover is then travelled over in a moment.

Kabir Sahib says,

बस्तु कहीं ढूंढै कहीं, केहि बिधि आवै हाथ।
कहै कबीर तब पाइये, जब भेदी लीजै साथ।।
भेदी लीन्हा साथ कर, दीनी बस्तु लखाय।
कोटि जनम का पंथ था, पल में पहुँचा जाय।।

-- कबीर साखी संग्रह भाग-1 (गुरुदेव का अंग 59, 60, पृ० 6)

The thing you want is at one place, but you search for it at another; how can you ever find it? O Kabir, if you want to find It, take one with you who knows where it is. He will then show you the thing you want. It is a long, long way to go, but He will take you there in a moment.

In order to learn how to cook well, one has to work under an expert cook. When studying medicine or engineering, one has also to do practical work. One cannot become a doctor or an engineer by mere reading. One needs the help of a teacher in all the external sciences. How much more is a teacher needed in the case of the abstruse and difficult spiritual science? For without a teacher, when we shut the eyes, we see only darkness within us. A teacher is needed to show us how to see the Inner Light. One needs a teacher in every profession. Some say that no spiritual teacher is necessary, and that they can acquire spiritual knowledge by themselves. They are like a person who refuses to drink water out of the well of someone, who is willing to serve him, but insists upon digging a well of his own. This shows that he is not thirsty as yet. Those who do not need Spirituality, do not need the Master either.

Bhai Nand Lal says,

क़दरे लाले ऊ बजुज़ आशिक़ न दानद हेच कस।
क़ीमते याकूत दानद चश्मे गौहर बारे मा।

-- दीवाने-गोया (ग़ज़ल 2, पृ० 11)

No one except a lover of rubies loves a ruby; he alone has the eye which can truly evaluate a ruby.

We can further illustrate the necessity of a *Guru* by another example. One wishes, let us say, to fly in an airplane. But the pilot has locked the door and engine of the plane, so that no ignorant person can get in and possibly be injured. A person who does not know how to operate a plane, does not even know how to board the plane. But even if he were to do so, the airplane would not start, since the engine is locked. Even if it were to start, the ignorant person does not know how to take it up or bring it down. Even if he were to take it up, he would not know the conditions in the upper regions. There would be nothing but certain destruction for him.

This human machine is wonderful. In the first place, the soul cannot concentrate itself at the proper place unless proper instructions have been given. Even if it should do so, however, it could not climb into the ship of *Shabd*. Even if it should somehow be connected with *Shabd*, it has no knowledge of the higher regions and does not know the direction to be followed in order to go up or to come down. If the pilot takes a new man with him in the plane, unlocks it, and takes him up on a few flights, the new man might then be able to fly the plane by himself.

For travelling through the spiritual regions, it is very necessary to have a pilot, who knows those regions and who has often travelled through them. If he is with us, the journey becomes possible. If such a Mahatma were to invite us to accompany Him and we should say, "No, thank you, we will fly our plane by ourselves," we would be very unfortunate. Maulana Rumi says that it is very dangerous to travel on this path without a Master.

क़दरे लाले ऊ बजुज़ आशिक़ न दानद हेच कस।
क़ीमते याकूत दानद चश्मे गौहर बारे मा।

-- दीवाने-गोया (ग़ज़ल 2, पृ० 11)

Seek a Master for this journey; without a Master it is full of risks and dangers.

Naam or *Dhunatmak Shabd* is an unspoken language. It cannot, therefore, be learned from books and scriptures. We can only get this wealth from a *Mahatma*, who gives initiation. He is *Shabd* personified, and the Lord's *Shabd* will be manifest only through Him.

बिनु सतिगुरु को नाउ न पाए प्रभि ऐसी बणत बणाई हे।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (मारू म० 3, पृ० 1046)

Without a Master no one can attain Shabd. The Lord has so ordained it.

गुर का सबदु गुर थै टिकै होर थै परगटु न होइ।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (सारंग की वार म० 3, पृ० 1249)

Shabd of the Guru is controlled by the Lord; It cannot be manifested by anyone else.

The Master knows all the inner secrets. What He says is based upon His own experience. His testimony, therefore, carries great conviction.

संतन की सुणि साची साखी।। सो बोलहि जो पेखहि आखी।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (रामकली म० 5, पृ० 894)

Listen to the testimony of the Sants; they say what they have seen with their own eyes.

Gurbani attaches great importance to the necessity of having a *Guru*. In the hymn called '*Asa-di-var*,' it is said that man has been sleeping for many lives. It may be taken as an axiom that no one, unless he has a True *Guru*, has ever reached the Truth, or will ever reach It.

बिनु सतिगुर किनै न पाइओ बिनु सतिगुर किनै न पाइआ।।
सतिगुर विचि आपु रखिओनु करि परगटु आखि सुणाइआ।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (आसा म० 1, पृ० 466)

No one ever found Him; no one ever will find Him. He Himself dwells in the Master. He manifests Himself in, and speaks through Him.

नदरि करहि जे आपणी ता नदरी सतिगुरु पाइआ।।
एहु जीउ बहुते जनम भरंमिआ ता सतिगुरि सबदु सुणाइआ।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (आसा म० 1, पृ० 465)

When the Lord is kind, the Master is kind. Man wanders in many births; the Master then attunes him to Shabd. The Master is most bountiful; let all the world know it. Meet the Master, realise the Truth by giving up egotism.

All the *Sant*s say that no one can meet the Lord without a Master. The Lord Himself has made this irrevocable law.

धुरि खसमै का हुकमु पइआ विणु सतिगुर चेतिआ न जाइ।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (बिहागड़ा की वार म० 3, पृ० 556)

It has been ordained by the Lord since the beginning; no one can know Him without a Master.

The *Guru*s say that God has given them to understand that no one can gain release without a Master.

कहु नानक प्रभि इहै जनाई।। बिनु गुर मुकति न पाईऐ भाई।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (गोंड म० 5, पृ० 864)

O Nanak, the Lord has so ordained; no one can gain release without a Master.

The Master is the physician who gives us sight. The Lord is inside us. All the world is blind and works in darkness. If one meets a Master, he can then see the Lord inside himself with his own eyes.

इहु जगु अंधा सभु अंधु कमावै बिनु गुर मगु न पाए।।
नानक सतिगुरु मिलै त अखी वेखै घरै अंदरि सचु पाए।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (सोरठ म० 3, पृ० 603)

This world is blind; all work in darkness. No one knows the path without a Perfect Master. On meeting a Master, one sees with one's own eyes. One realises the Truth within oneself.

Who are the really blind? Not those whose outer eyes are without sight, but those who are far from the Lord.

अंधे एहि न आखीअनि जिन मुखि लोइण नाहि।।
अंधे सेई नानका खसमहु घुथे जाहि।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (रामकली की वार म० 2, पृ० 954)

They are not blind, who have no sight. O Nanak, blind are those, who are separated from the Lord.

Guru Arjan also says that a man with eyes is blind, since he cannot see the Lord who is so close to him, and fearlessly commits sins oblivious of His presence.

पेखत चाखत कहीअत अंधा सुनीअत सुनीऐ नाही।।
निकटि वसतु कउ जाणै दूरे पापी पाप कमाही।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (सूही म० 5, पृ० 741)

He sees, tastes and speaks in ignorance; he hears and yet hears not. He considers that which is near to be far; he, a confirmed sinner, continues to sin.

We see the gross world with gross eyes, but our Third Eye or *Divya Chakshu* is closed. It is only when the Third Eye opens, that we can see the Subtle, Causal and other regions of consciousness, which are beyond the reach of the mind and intellect.

अंधा सोइ जि अंधु कमावै तिसु रिदै सि लोचन नाही।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (मलार की वार म० 1, पृ० 1289)

He is blind and acts blindly. The Third Eye has not opened in him.

We are deceived by *Maya* and are blinded. We cannot see beyond the gross world.

माइआ मोहि हरि चेतै नाही।। जमपुरि बधा दुख सहाही।।
अन्ना बोला किछु नदरि न आवै मनमुख पापि पचावणिआ।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (माझ म० 3, पृ० 111)

Deluded by Maya, a person does not remember the Lord; he suffers in this death-afflicted land. He is blind and deaf and sees nothing; he is self-centred and is consumed by his sins.

It is impossible to enter and pass through the subtle regions by oneself. It is necessary to have the guidance of those, who have already travelled there. Maulana Rumi says that if you wish to go on a pilgrimage, you should go with one who has already made the journey. The worries and difficulties of the journey will be reduced. It does not matter whether such a guide is a Hindu or a Turk or an Arab.

मर्दे–हज्जी हमरही हाजी तलब, ख़्वाह हिन्दू ख़्वाह तुर्क ओ या अरब।

-- मसनवी मौलाना रूमी (दफ़्तर 1, पृ० 304)

If you wish to go on a pilgrimage, go with one who has already made it. Whether he be a Hindu, a Turk or an Arab, it matters not.

Masters are spiritual physicians and open one's spiritual eyes. Shams-i-Tabriz says,

गर अयाँ ख़्वाही ज़ ख़ाके–पाए–ईशाँ सुरमा साज़,
कि ज़–आं ईशाँ कोरे–मादर ज़ाद रा रह बीं कुनंद।

-- कुल्लियाते-शम्स तब्रेज़ (पृ० 262)

If you wish to see the manifestation of the Lord, put the Dust of the Feet of the Sants in your eyes as collyrium, for they can grant sight even to the born-blind.

That collyrium is *Naam* or *Shabd*. By applying it, one can see the spiritual regions. Unless one applies it, he remains blind, and his coming to, and going from this world are of no use.

सबदु न जाणहि से अन्ने बोले से कितु आए संसारा।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (सोरठ म० 3, पृ० 601)

Those who know not Shabd are blind and deaf. Their coming here serves no useful purpose.

Guru Nanak tells us that *Shabd* enlightens us and enables us to see and realise the Lord.

गुण नानकु बोलै भली बाणि।। तुम होहु सुजाखे लेहु पछाणि।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (बसंत म० 1, पृ० 1190)

Learn this from Nanak: enlighten yourself and realise Him.

The Lord is in every heart, but we are, as it were, suffering from cataract.

है घट मैं सूझत नहीं, लानत ऐसी जिंद।
तुलसी या संसार को, भया मोतिया बिंद।।

-- संत तुलसी साहिब

He is in the heart, but we see Him not; such a life is a curse; O Tulsi, we suffer from cataract.

Sight is a great blessing to us. A sightless person, longing for sight, cannot see and wanders about in the dark. If he recovers his sight by an operation, he feels greatly indebted to the surgeon. The inner eyes are millions of times more useful. Without them one cannot see beyond this world. One cannot see the Lord. Without Him we have been wandering from birth to birth. The Master opens the Inner Eye or the knowledge-centre. This inner vision is most essential, but it is highly regrettable that we, engulfed in *Maya*, do not experience it.

Not only men, but even *Trideva* gods long for the Third Eye. They cannot make spiritual progress without it. Not to speak of their inability to see the Lord, they cannot even see their own mother, *Shakti* (primal force).

एका माई जुगति विआई तिनि चेले परवाणु।।
इकु संसारी इकु भंडारी इकु लाए दीबाणु।।
जिव तिसु भावै तिवै चलावै जिव होवै फुरमाणु।।
ओहु वेखै ओना नदरि न आवै बहुता एहु विडाणु।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (जप जी म० 1, पृ० 7)

Mother Nature conceived, O wonder! and gave birth to the Three Deities; one who creates the world, the other who sustains the world, the third who destroys the world. He sees them all, but they see Him not; how strange!

Gosain Tulsidas says that no one can cross the ocean of the universe without a Master.

गुर बिनु भव निधि तरइ न कोई। जौ बिरंचि संकर सम होई।।

-- श्रीरामचरितमानस (7:93:5)

No one can cross the Ocean without a Master, even if he is an ascetic like Shankar.

If persons of such high status require a *Guru*, what about the common man? He may try in millions of ways, but he can achieve nothing. Hence the *Guru* says,

बिनु गुरु दाते कोइ न पाए।। लख कोटी जे करम कमाए।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (मारू म० 3, पृ० 1057)

No one can find the Lord without a Master, even though he goes on making millions of efforts.

Tulsi Sahib further says that release cannot be gained without the Grace of the Master.

तुलसी बिना करम किसी मुर्शिद रसीदा के।
राहे–निजात दूर है उस पार देखना।।

-- तुलसी साहिब (सन्तों की बानी, पृ० 410)

O Tulsi, without the Grace of a Master, it is difficult to see the path of release, far off, beyond the physical bounds.

The *Guru*s, in their hymns, have placed great emphasis on the need for a *Sant* or a Master, saying that no one need

have any doubt that anyone has ever crossed the Ocean of Existence without a Master.

मत को भरमि भुलै संसारि।। गुरु बिनु कोइ न उतरसि पारि।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (गोंड म० 5, पृ० 864)

Let no one remain in doubt; no one has crossed over without a Master.

This universe is an ocean. The Master is a ship and He Himself is its captain. No one can cross over without the Master. It is only through His Grace that we can meet the Lord. No one gets release without this.

गुरु जहाजु खेवटु गुरू गुर बिनु तरिआ न कोइ।।
गुर प्रसादि प्रभु पाईऐ गुर बिनु मुकति न होइ।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (सवैये म० 4, पृ० 1401)

Guru is the ship, Guru is the captain. No one has crossed over without a Guru. One meets the Lord through the Guru's Grace. One cannot get liberated without a Guru.

In the religious Scriptures of the Hindus, the necessity of having a *Guru* is also strongly emphasized. In the 'Katha Upanishad', it is said,

श्रवणायापि बहुभिर्यो न लभ्यः शृण्वन्तोऽपि बहवो यं न विद्यु। आश्चर्यो वक्ता कुशलोऽस्य लब्धाश्चर्योज्ञाता कुशलानुशिष्टः।

-- कठोपनिषद् (1:2:7)

People cannot know Him simply by hearing about Him. The Mahatma, who says anything about Him is a wonderful person. He is worthy and wise who gains access to Him. No one can realise God without a Guru.

It is again said in the 'Katha Upanishad':

न नरेणावरेण प्रोक्त एष सुविज्ञेयो बहुधा चिन्त्यमानः।
अनन्यप्रोक्ते गतिरत्र नास्त्यणीयान्ह्यतर्क्यमणुप्रमाणात्।

-- कठोपनिषद् (1:2:8)

God cannot be realised without initiation, however much one may meditate on Him. Unless you are initiated by a true Guru, you cannot realise Him because He is so subtle that He is beyond the reach of imagination.

In the 'Chandogya Upanishad' it is said,

श्रुत् ह्योव में भगवद्दृशेभ्य आचार्याद्धैव विद्या विदिता साधिष्ठं प्रापतीति...।

-- छांदोग्य उपनिषद् (4:8:3)

It has been said by revered persons such as Gurus, that without initiation, we cannot comprehend our Reality.

In the 'Mundaka Upanishad' it is said,

परीक्ष्य लोकान् कर्मचितान् ब्राह्मणो निर्वेदमायान्नास्त्यकृतः कृतेन।
तद्विज्ञानार्थं स गुरुमेवाभिगच्छेत् समित्पाणिः श्रोत्रियं ब्रह्मनिष्ठम्।

-- मुण्डकोपनिषद् (1:2:12)

Let a Brahmin, after he has experienced all these worlds which are gained by actions, acquire freedom from all desires. That which is Eternal (which has never been made) cannot be attained by means of the transitory (which has been made). Let him, in order to understand this, take faggots (a sign of discipleship) in his hand and approach a Guru who is learned and who dwells eternally in Brahm.

Without a *Guru* one cannot follow the directions given in the scriptures. The 'Svetashvatra Upanishad' says,

यस्य देवे परा भक्तिर्यथा देवे तथा गुरौ।
तस्यैते कथिता ह्यर्था प्रकाशन्ते नहात्मनः।।

-- श्वेताश्वतरोपनिषद् (6:23)

He who is firmly devoted to the Lord, and is also as greatly devoted to the Master, as to the Lord, will understand the hints given in this Upanishad.

In the 'Manu Smriti' it is said,

ब्रह्मारम्भे अवसाने च पादौ ग्राह्यौ गुरोः सदा।
संहत्य हस्ताव् अध्येयं स हि ब्रह्माञजलिः स्मृतः।।

-- मनु-स्मृति (श्लोक II:71 & II:192)

A disciple should, both before the beginning and at the close of a lesson, touch with both hands the feet of his Master and obey his preceptor.

ब्रह्म यस् त्व् अननुज्ञातम् अधीयानाद् अवाप्नुयात्।
स ब्रह्मस्तेयसंयुक्तो नरकं प्रतिप द्यते।।

-- मनु-स्मृति (श्लोक II:116)

Those who, without a Guru, learn the Vedas by hearing from others, are really thieves of the Vedas, since their real meaning cannot be understood without a Guru, and one who wrongly interprets the Vedas goes to hell.

लौकिकं वैदिकं वा–अपि तथा–अध्यात्मिकम् एव वा।
आददीत यतो ज्ञानं तं पूर्वम् अभिवादयेत्।।

-- मनु-स्मृति (श्लोक II:117)

Bow to Him, from whom you wish to gain worldly knowledge or Divine Knowledge.

शरीरं च–एव वाचं च बुद्धीन्द्रिय–मनांसि च।
नियम्य प्राञजलिस् तिष्ठेद् वीक्षमाणो गुरोर् मुखम्।।

-- मनु-स्मृति (श्लोक II:192)

He should stand with folded hands, having controlled his body, tongue, intellect, desires and heart.

In the 'Bhagavad Gita' it is said,

तद्विद्धि प्रणिपातेन परिप्रश्नेन सेवया।
उपदेक्ष्यन्ति ते ज्ञान क्षानिनस्तत्त्वदर्शिनः।।

-- श्रीमद्भगवद्गीता (4:34)

You should prostrate yourself before a Perfect Master and carry out spiritual practices and serve Him. Only a Guru, who knows the Reality, can impart this Knowledge to you.

We cannot gain knowledge of the spiritual path without a Master. It is very necessary to know a Master.

Jesus Christ said,

No man cometh to the Father but through me. (Bible, John 14:6)
He who does not know the Son, does not know the Father. (Bible, Matthew 11:27)
He that receiveth you receiveth me, and he that receiveth me receiveth Him that sent me. (Bible, Matthew 10:40)

A search through the Scriptures of all the religions shows that all lay emphasis on the point that no one can gain release without a *Guru*.

सासत बेद सिमृति सभि सोधे सभ एका बात पुकारी।।
बिन गुर मुकति न कोऊ पावै मनि वेखहु करि बीचारी।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (गूजरी म० 5, पृ० 495)

The Shastras, Vedas and Smritis, all say the same; hold fast to the belief that there is no release without a Master.

The method of taking shelter with the *Guru* is the best method of realising the Lord. Hazrat Mohammed said to Hazrat Ali:

गुफ़्त पैग़म्बर अली रा क–ऐ अली, शेरे–हक़्क़ी पहलवाने–पुर दिली,
लेक बर शेरी मकुन तू इअतिमीद, अन्दर आ दर साया–ए–नख़ले–उम्मीद।
या अली अज़ जुमला–ए ताआते, राह–बर गुज़ीं तू साया–ए–ख़ासे–इलाह,
दस्तगीर बन्दा–ए–ख़ासे–इलाह, तालिबाँ रा मी बरद ता पेशगाह।

-- मसनवी मौलाना रूमी (दफ़्तर 1, पृ० 310)

The Prophet said, ' O Ali! You are the Lion of Truth, a hero and a brave man; but do not rely on your own strength alone. Come under the shade of the fruit-bearing tree. From among the various methods of meeting the Lord choose the best: find out the loved one of the Lord. He will hold your hand, for He is beloved of the Lord. He takes the seekers to the Court of the Lord.'

हेच न–कुशद नफ़्स रा जुज़ ज़िल्ले–पीर, दामने आँ नफ़्स कुश रा सख्त गीर।
रौ बख़ुस्प अन्दर पनाहे–मक़बिले, बू–किह् आज़ादत कुनद साहिब दिले।
फ़ाख़्ता साँ रोज़ो–शब कुन कू व कू–गंजे–पिनहाँ रा ज़ दरवेशे बजू।
ता तवानी ज़ औलिया रू बर मताब, ज़हद कुन व अल्लाहु आअलम बस्सवाब।

-- मसनवी मौलाना रूमी (दफ़्तर 2, पृ० 242, 214, 54, 214)

Nothing except the Grace of the Master can kill the ego; hold fast to the garment of the Redeemer. Go and sleep under His protection; it may be that He will then grant you release; go on cooing like the cuckoo day and night; seek the secret of the Hidden Treasure from the Master. Go from door to door and street to street; search for Him time and again; do not turn your face away from the Sants; then leave the rest to God. (Rumi)

Spirituality is a difficult Path and cannot be trodden without the Company of a *Guru.*

The soul is covered with three sheaths, namely, the Gross, Subtle and Causal bodies. One can, with the Master's help, reach the Subtle and Causal regions. His Original Home, however, is beyond the three regions, in the fourth region. There are many entanglements and obstructions in the gross region. If we reach the subtle region, there are numerous misleading and distracting devices there, and it is difficult to escape them. And beyond that region, it is impossible to enter the region of pure consciousness all alone. To walk on this path is to tread on a razor's edge.

There is danger at every step. He who wishes to know the reality or to get true knowledge and to meet the Lord should seek a Perfect Master, who knows the way. It is said in the 'Katha Upanishad':

उत्तिष्ठत जाग्रत प्राप्य वरान्निबोधतः।
क्षुरस्य धारा नि शता दुरत्यया दुर्ग पथस्तत्कवयो वदन्ति।।

-- कठोपनिषद् (1:3:14)

Arise, awake, learn the true knowledge quickly. Seek a Master who has knowledge of what is beyond, since the Mahatmas say that the path is sharper than the edge of a sword, and it is very difficult to tread it.

It is impossible to realise the Lord without a Master. A disciple needs the help of the Master at every step.

Maulana Rumi says,

पीर रा बगुज़ीं किह् बे पीर ईं सफ़र, हस्त बस पुर आफ़तो–खौफ़ो–ख़तर।
हर किह् ऊ बे मुर्शिदे दर राह शुद, ऊ ज़–गूलाँ गुमरह ओ दर चाह शुद।
गर न बाशद साया–ए पीर ऐ फुजूल, पस तुरा सरगशता दारद बांगे–गूल।
गूलत अज़ रह अफ़गनद अन्दर गज़ंद, अज़ तू दाही तर दरीं रह बस बुदंद।

-- मसनवी मौलाना रूमी (दफ़्तर 1, पृ० 308-09)

बांगे गूलां हस्त बाँगे आशना, आशनाए कू कशद सुए फ़ना।

-- मसनवी मौलाना रूमी (दफ़्तर 1, पृ० 81)

Search for a Master, because to tread this path without Him is full of risks and dangers. If you tread this path without a Master, Satan leads you astray and throws you in a well. If the protecting hand of the Master is not on your head, then the voice of Satan will worry and lead you astray. Many wise men trod this path, but were led astray by the Negative Power (Kaal). There are Shabds (Sounds) of Kaal inside us, which are imitations of the Lord's Divine Sounds. They lead you to destruction.

We can cross this gross darkness through the merciful Grace of the Master only. When the soul leaves the gross region, the Master accompanies it and helps it in overcoming all difficulties and pitfalls.

बिखड़े दाउ लंघावै मेरा सतिगुरु सुख सहज सेती घरि जाते।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (बसंत म० 5, पृ० 1185)

The Master helps in overcoming all the difficulties. One reaches Home safely and attains bliss.

The Subtle and Causal regions are like wastelands. Maulana Rumi says that you should not tread this path alone. Take a companion with you on the way. Do not enter this jungle relying on your own strength.

यार बायद राह रा तनहा मरौ, अज़ सरे–खुद अंदरीं सहरा मशौ।

-- मसनवी मौलाना रूमी (दफ़्तर 1, पृ० 312)

You should not journey without a friend; do not enter this desert relying on your own self.

Hafiz has also stated with great firmness that you should not go on this way without a Master, for without a Master it is dark and there is danger of your going astray.

क़तअ ईं मरहला बे हमरही–ए–ख़िज़र मकुन,
जुल्मात अस्त ब–तर्स अज़ ख़तरे–गुमराही।

-- दीवाने-हाफ़िज़ (पृ० 408)

Do not tread this path without a guide; there is utter darkness. Beware of going astray.

There is Utter Darkness without the *Guru.*

There is utter darkness without the Master, *Guru*. The reality cannot be clearly apprehended because it is beyond the mind and the intellect. It expresses itself in an unspoken language. But the Master makes the disciple understand through contemplation. Without a Master, one remains entangled in ignorance. Falsehood appears to be the truth, and one becomes trapped in it. here is no other way to reach the goal, except through the Grace of the Master. Without a Master, success is not obtained and one is not freed from attachment, *Maya* and the three *Gunas*.

सतिगुर बाझहु घोर अंधारा डूबि मुए बिनु पाणी।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (मलार म० 1, पृ० 1275)

There is utter darkness without a Master; such a life is worse than death. It is like drowning in desert sands, a tragedy in a waterless waste.

One does not gain emancipation without a Master, nor does one know the secret of true Spirituality. What is learned

from the Master is the secret of the heart and is practical knowledge. It is a practical matter.

गुर बिनु घोरु अंधारु गुरू बिनु समझ न आवै।।
गुर बिनु सुरति न सिधि गुरू बिनु मुकति न पावै।।
गुरु करु सचु बीचारु गुरू करु रे मन मेरे।।
गुरु करु सबद सपुन्न अघन कटहि सभ तेरे।।
गुरु नयणि बयणि गुरु गुरु करहु गुरू सति कवि नल्य कहि।।
जिनि गुरू न देखिअउ नहु कीअउ ते अकयथ संसार महि।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (सवैये म० 4, पृ० 1399)

There is utter darkness without a Master. One cannot understand without a Master. Without a Master the soul is not realised. Without a Master liberation is not attained. Seek a Master, meditate on truth. When you meet a Master, Shabd will remove all your sufferings. Let the Master dwell in the eyes. Let the Master dwell on the tongue. O! Praise the Master always. Nall, the poet has said so. They who have not seen the Master, they have done nothing. They have wasted their lives.

Ordinary people are in utter darkness. On closing the eyes, there is nothing but darkness. In addition, the darkness of ignorance pervades everywhere. The person who can dispel this darkness is the '*Guru*' गुरु. "*Gu* गु" means darkness and "*ru* रु" means light: one who can light up the darkness, one who can take us from utter darkness to the Light of Truth. The celebrated poet, Kalidas says that the *Guru* is one who can produce Light in darkness and take one by the hand into the presence of the Lord.

प्रवर्तितो दीप इव प्रदीपात्

-- कालिदास, रघुवंशम् (5:37)

The Guru shows Light in the darkness; He takes one by the hand into the presence of the Lord. (Raghuvansham)

Being in darkness, whatever one does becomes the cause of one's bondage. *Sant*s say that very little is gained by reading or listening to religious books, the performance of formal religious practices and rites, worship, repetition, meditation and praising God's virtues. These do not give release from bondage. Kabir Sahib says that without a *Guru*,

charities and the repetition of holy words are of no use; the Puranas and the Vedas confirm this fact:

गुरु बिनु माला फेरता, गुरु बिनु करता दान।
गुरु बिनु सब निस्फल गया, बूझौ बेद पुरान।।

-- कबीर साखी संग्रह भाग-1 (निगुरा का अंग 1, पृ० 15)

The counting of beads without a Guru; giving in charity without a Guru; all are of no use whatsoever. The Puranas and Vedas say it so. (Kabir)

The word '*Guru*' can also be derived from the Sanskrit root, '*Gri* गृ' meaning the hearing power. hence, '*Guru*' is one, who bestows both Light and Sound to the initiate.

Without a *Guru* all actions and observances are fruitless. Without a Master all worship is a waste. Unless the internal eyes are opened and unless one knows the reality, one cannot gain emancipation. It is, therefore, necessary to take shelter with some *Guru* who can turn us away from external practices and connect us to the inner practice of *Naam* and take our soul to its Pristine Home, beyond this lower universe of vast regions. On meeting a Master, darkness is dispelled. He is seen as being radiantly present on all sides.

सतिगुरु मिलै अंधेरा जाइ।। जह देखा तह रहिआ समाइ।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (रामकली म० 1, पृ० 876)

On meeting a Master darkness is dispelled. He is present wherever one may look.

Even if there were hundreds of moons and thousands of suns, our eyes, if they had no sight, would find utter darkness. Similarly, there may be millions of Lights on the spiritual path, but unless our Third Eye opens it is all dark. The Aadi Granth says that without a *Guru* these Lights remain hidden and the darkness persists. The *Guru* opens our Inner Eye and we begin to see the Spiritual Light.

जे सउ चंदा उगवहि सूरज चड़हि हजार।।
एते चानण होदिआँ गुर बिनु घोर अंधार।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (आसा की वार म० 2, पृ० 463)

Even if there be hundreds of moons; even if there be thousands of suns; with all their light, there is darkness without a Master.

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HISTORICAL REFERENCES
(*Aitihasik Pramaan* ऐतिहासिक प्रमाण)

No one can have access to the spiritual regions without a Master. According to the Hindu scriptures, when Narad Rishi went to *Vishnu Puri* (abode of Lord Vishnu), he was denied admittance because he had no Master (*Guru*). Therefore, he had to adopt a Master.

Shukdev, the son of Veda Vyas, was possessed of spiritual knowledge even while in his mother's womb, but when he visited *Vishnu Puri*, he was turned out because he had no *Guru*. He could not visit the spiritual regions, and had to adopt Raja Janak as his *Guru*.

There is no instance in history that tells of any man making the spiritual ascent without a *Guru*. *Sant*s who possess knowledge from the time of their birth are rare. They do not, however, go against the tradition, and for this reason they also adopt a *Guru*. Kabir Sahib, for example, adopted Gosain Ramananda as his *Guru*. It is a historical fact that such *Sant*s, although they posessed knowledge from the time of birth, remained in the company of *Sant*s and derived benefit from them. Guru Amardas said that it is ordained by the Lord from the beginning that He cannot be realised except with the help of a *Guru*.

धुरि खसमै का हुकमु पाइआ विणु सतिगुर चेतिआ न जाइ।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (बिहागड़ा की वार म० 3, पृ० 556)

It has been ordained by the Lord since the beginning: no one can know Him without a Master.

This being so in the case of those who are born *Sant*s, it follows that a *Guru* is all the more necessary for common

people. According to tradition, even the incarnations of Lord Vishnu – Lord Rama and Lord Krishna, adopted the Rishis Vasishth and Garg respectively as their *Guru*s. These instances are mentioned solely for our benefit. Rama and Krishna, who were Lords of the three worlds, had to obey the law; lesser men can claim no exception. In support of this, Guru Nanak says that no one has ever had knowledge without a *Guru*. You can verify this truth, he says, from *Brahma*, or the great sages Narad and Veda Vyas.

भाई रे गुर बिनु गिआनु न होइ।। पूछहु ब्रहमे नारदै बेद बिआसै कोइ।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (सिरीराग म० 1, पृ० 59)

O brother, none but a Master can tell the secret of God-Realisation. You may ask this of Brahma, Narad or Veda Vyas.

Tulsi Sahib says,

राम कृष्ण सों को बड़ो, तिनहू तो गुरु कीन्ह।
तीन लोक के वे धनी, सो गुरु आगे अधीन।।

-- कबीर साहिब, सुमिरन बोध

Who can be greater than Rama and Krishna?; but they also had a Guru. They were the Lords of the Triple Worlds; but they were subservient to the Guru.

Whoever progressed on the spiritual path, did so at the instance of a *Mahatma*. Ashtavakra imparted knowledge to Raja Janak. Gorakh Nath obtained it from Bhartri Hari, Arjuna from Lord Krishna and Vivekananda from Ramakrishna.

Amongst the Sikhs, it was Guru Nanak who inspired the second Guru, Angad; Guru Angad inspired Guru Amar Das; Guru Amardas inspired Ramdas; Guru Ramdas passed on the Light to Guru Arjan, and so on, till the Tenth Guru, Guru Gobind Singh.

Maulana Rumi says that it was Shams-i-Tabriz who changed his life.

मौलवी हरगिज़ न ख़ुद मौलाए–रूम, ता ग़ुलामे–शम्स तबरेज़ी न शुद।

-- कितबुल-बैअत (पृ० 8)

The man of mere learning that I was, I did not become Rum's man of God until after I became the Slave of Shams-i-Tabriz.

He again says,

बया साक़ी इनायत कुन तू मौलानाए–रूमी रा,
ग़ुलामे–शम्स तबरेज़म क़लन्दर वार मी गरदम।

-- नुकाते-दीवाने-शम्स तब्रेज़ (पृ० 8)

O Master, give Maulana Rumi a kind look. I say without shame or reserve, as do Qalandars (God-intoxicated person), that I am a Slave of Shams-i-Tabriz.

Many *Mahatma*s have mentioned their *Guru*s in their hymns, while some have not done so. The principle, however, is the same. The *Guru* is a Light that lights another, and a Life that gives rise to another. It is very necessary for us, who are engulfed in *Maya*, to obtain initiation from a True *Guru*.

Before and after Guru Nanak.

Bread is for the hungry, and water is for the thirsty. Nature provided milk for a child born five hundred years ago and also for one born a thousand years ago. Nature is also providing milk for children being born today. The law of nature is immutable. It is against the law of nature to say that no help was available for one seeking the spiritual path before Guru Nanak, or that no helpis available for a seeker born after Guru Nanak's time. It is not correct to say that True *Guru*s visited this earth for a period of two or three centuries only and that the world has been without them both before and after. It is not correct to say that the 'Law of Supply and Demand' operated for this period alone.

The teachings of the *Sant*s are for all the world and for all times. They are not confined to two or three hundred years only.

परथाइ साखी महा पुरख बोलदे साझी सगल जहानै।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (सोरठ की वार म० 3, पृ० 647)

Great Sants speak Eternal Truths for all the world and for all times.

In the verses of the *Mool Mantra*, as well as at other places in the Aadi Granth, the *Guru*s use the words,

ੴ सतिगुर प्रसादि।।

He is One, and is realised by the Grace of the Master.

It is a clear declaration that the great Lord mentioned in the "Basic Mantra" and at other places in the Aadi Granth is realised through the Grace of the Master. This has been stated as an eternal principle and the self-evident Truth.

In the 'Anurag Sagar', Kabir has stated that he was born in all the Four Ages to preach *Naam* (the Divine Sound). The *bani*s (hymns) of the *Bhagat*s (great devotees) contain teachings of the *Guru*s of many earlier times. It is clear from the Aadi Granth and the hymns of Bhai Gurdas that Perfect Masters or great souls, the True *Shabd* or the Word, have emancipated seekers in all the ages.

कृसनु बलभद्रु गुर पग लगि धिआवै।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (गउड़ी गुआरेरी म० 4, पृ० 165)

Krishna and Bal Bhadra meditated at the feet of the Master.

नामा छीबा कबीरु जोलाहा पूरे गुर ते गति पाई।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (सिरीराग म० 3, पृ० 67)

Nama, the dyer, and Kabir, the weaver, obtained salvation through the Master.

बाणी वजी चहु जुगी सचो सचु सुणाइ।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (सिरीराग म० 3, पृ० 35)

The Word called out in all the Four Ages; It gave the message of Eternal Truth.

सचा सबदु सची है बाणी।। गुरमुखि जुगि जुगि आखि वखाणी।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (आसा म० 3, पृ० 424)

True is Shabd; True is the Word. The devotee sings its praise. He sings throughout the Ages.

Happy was Raja Harish-Chandra; he had the charming Tara as his consort. But she preferred to be with the Lord in the company of *Sant*s.

साध संगति मिल गावंदे राती जाइ सुणै गुरबाणी।।

-- भाई गुरदास, वारां गिआन रतनावली (10:6)

At night Tara would go to the place wherein the form of Holy Congregation, would recite the holy hymns.

महां पुरख अचाणचक गणका वाडे आइ खलोता।।

-- भाई गुरदास, वारां गिआन रतनावली (10:21)

The Great One suddenly appeared in the courtyard of the courtesan.

It is mentioned in the 'Janam Sakhi of Bhai Bala' that Guru Nanak said that in the *Kali Yuga* (Iron Age), the *Sant*s have to redeem people by taking a number of incarnations.

सत्तर जामे भगत जन चौदस सतिगुर राए।।
भर बेड़े लै जाएगे संत जनां के पूर।।
बेमुख तुट्टे तुट्टे मूए मनमुख न भए कबूल।।

-- जनम साखी, गुरु नानक, भाई बाला (पृ० 545)

There will be seventy Bhagats and fourteen Perfect Masters. They will take thousands across to the abode of Sants. Those who obstinately turn away, are doomed to disaster, the self-centred ones are not accepted. (Janam Sakhi)

From the above quotations, it is clear that *Guru*s and their teachings have always existed. *Guru*s are present in the world at all times, so that those who are seeking for the Lord may reach Him through them.

हरि जुगह जुगो जुग जुगह जुगो सद पीड़ी गुरु चलंदी।।
जुगि जुगि पीड़ी चलै सतिगुर की जिनी गुरमुखि नामु धिआइआ।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (सिरीराग म० 4, पृ० 79)

At all times throughout the Ages, the Gurus did exist. Throughout all the Ages, the Masters exist, and so do men of faith, who follow Naam.

जुगि जुगि संत भले प्रभ तेरे।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (मारू सोलहे म० 1, पृ० 1025)

In all the Ages, your Sants have existed.

*Granth*s- Texts, Scriptures and Learned Men cannot take the place of *Guru*s.

Guru is the name of a very pure spiritual being, who has access to *Sach Khand* (True Region). He has experience of the Gross, Subtle and Causal regions. He has experience of spiritual matters and is free from the bondage of the senses.

Unless we become connected with such a person, our spiritual aspirations do not awaken.

The *Guru*, in fact, is a glowing lamp whose light rekindles the lights that have blown out. A burnt-out lamp can not do this. Many persons say that we can light the lamp of knowledge by merely reading religious books. They say that we need no *Guru* and that the books will serve the purpose of the *Guru*. Let us consider what these books are. They are invaluable records of the spiritual experiences of *Sant*s and holy men. It is, therefore, good to be fond of reading such religious books. We must have respect and love for them. But persons who depend upon books alone have yet to understand the difference between insentient and sentient beings.

Books stimulate the desire to hear about Spirituality and to understand its principles, and to read accounts of the lives of *Sant*s. All this can be of great benefit to us, but it cannot activate the spiritual life within us. We can obtain this spiritual life only from some spiritually-realised soul. Only a burning lamp can light another lamp. It is impossible to get life from inert matter.

Similarly, spiritual knowledge cannot be attained by the mere reading of religious books, were it even for millions of years.

Spiritual knowledge cannot be taught. It is a 'touch' which can be had only from a man of realised experience. "Spirituality cannot be taught, but caught." The experience of *Sant*s cannot be had except by revelation. It is not simply a matter of knowing it; one has to realise it as an experience.

The Gurus have discussed this at considerable length.

हरि की सेवा सतिगुरु पूजहु करि किरपा आपि तरावै।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (मलार म० 4, पृ० 1264)

To worship and adore the True Guru is to serve the Lord. In His Mercy, He saves us and carries us across.

Religious books and *Mahatma*s of the past ages advise us to come to a living *Guru* and render loving devotion to Him.

चरन साध के धोइ धोइ पीउ।। अरपि साध कउ अपना जीउ।।
साध की धूरि करहु इसनानु।। साध ऊपरि जाइऐ कुरबानु।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (गउड़ी सुखमनी म० 5, पृ० 283)

Drink the Water that has washed the Feet of Sants; surrender your life to the Sants. Bathe in the Dust of the Sants. May I be a sacrifice unto Them!

संता की होइ दासरी एहु अचारा सिखु री।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (आसा म० 5, पृ० 400)

Serve the Sants, this is the way for the disciple.

Bhai Gurdas says,

बेद ग्रंथ गुर हटि है जिस लगि भवजल पार उतारा।।
सतिगुर बाझ न बुझीऐ जिचर धरे न प्रभु अवतारा।।

-- भाई गुरदास, वारां गिआन रतनावली (1:17)

The Vedas and Granths deal with experiences about the Lord; they tell us of means to cross the Ocean of Existence, but Reality cannot be understood without a Master. The Master comes and makes us understand.

People study the scriptures regularly throughout their lives. They may become intellectual giants or very learned persons. They may deliver lectures for hours on end. But do they possess spiritual knowledge even in the slightest degree? Actually, they are blank so far as spiritual life is concerned, because they are not connected with a living Master. It is said in 'Asa-di-var' of Aadi Granth:

पड़ि पड़ि गडी लदीअहि पड़ि पड़ि भरीअहि साथ।।
पड़ि पड़ि बेड़ी पाईऐ पड़ि पड़ि गडीअहि खात।।
पड़िअहि जेते बरस बरस पड़ीअहि जेते मास।।
पड़ीऐ जेती आरजा पड़ीअहि जेते सास।।
नानक लेखै इक गल होरु हउमै झखणा झाख।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (आसा म० 1, पृ० 467)

We may read whole cartloads of books, and make great piles of them. We may read shiploads of books, and build up huge libraries. We may read for years on end, we may read for months and months, we may read for life after life, we may read till our last breath, but the thing that matters is just one thing. O Nanak, the rest is labour lost.

नानक कागद लख मणा पड़ि पड़ि कीचै भाउ।।
मसू तोटि न आवई लेखणि पउणु चलाउ।।
भी तेरी कीमति ना पवै हउ केवडु आखा नाउ।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (सिरीराग म० 1, पृ० 15)

O Nanak, one may read pages weighing pounds. One may know their mysterious accent. One may write without a break. One may write with the speed of the winds. O Lord! You cannot be valued thus; O Lord! Your Name cannot be described.

Books contain knowledge about the Lord, but,

गिआनु धिआनु धुनि जाणीऐ अकथु कहावै सोइ।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (सिरीराग म० 1, पृ० 59)

Know that from the Vibration of the Word, we obtain Spiritual Wisdom and Meditation. Through it, we speak the Unspoken,

That knowledge is within you. But unless you know the method of going within and opening the knot of consciousness and gross matter, you remain without realisation of it. If spiritual knowledge were to be had from books, the learned ones would have become self-realised. But they are no more than walking encyclopaedias, and are as lifeless as a mansion of bricks and stones. The brain, full of book-knowledge, is like a donkey that is carrying a load of sandalwood but is unaware of its scent, or like a spoon that remains in the halwa day and night but does not know its taste. If one could become spiritually-minded by reading books, there would be as great a flood of Spirituality as there is a flood of books. But how many really enlightened souls do we come across in this age of books? Hardly any.

Whenever *Sant*s come into the world, there is a flood of Spirituality. Numberless seekers are dyed in the colour of the *Sant*s and turn to the spiritual life. A soul can get spiritual uplift only from another soul. An intellectual teacher cannot do this. One may be very intellectual or learned, but unless he is himself spiritually evolved, he cannot help another. It is very easy to give discourses or talks on spiritual matters, but it is quite another matter to lead a spiritual life. No one can become spiritual by simply studying books on the Science of

Spirituality. Any claim to Spirituality, based on such a study, would be pretentious. It is useless to expect that one can obtain Spirituality from a learned man. Maulana Rumi says,

अन्दर आ दर साया–ए–आँ आक़िले, किश नतानद बुर्द अज़ रह नाक़िले।

-- मसनवी मौलाना रूमी, निकलसन (2961 दफ़्तर 1, पृ० 182)

Take shelter with the Master, one should not tread the path with an impostor.

He, whose company and example awaken the desire for spiritual progress in the disciple, is a *Guru*. Such persons are Oceans of Mercy. Whoever takes shelter with them is saved from the Wheel of eighty-four; we should serve them with body and mind. The *Guru*s say that our bodies, minds and wealth belong to the *Sant*s. And it is owing to their Mercy that we taste the Nectar of *Naam* and obtain peace. No one, except the *Sant*s, is truly charitable. They lead all, who come to them, to the higher regions.

तनु संतन का धनु संतन का मनु संतन का कीआ।।
संत प्रसादि हरि नामु धिआइआ सरब कुसल तब थीआ।।
संतन बिनु अवरु न दाता बीआ।।
जो जो सरणि परै साधू की सो पारगरामी कीआ।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (सोरठ म० 5, पृ० 610)

Body, mind and wealth belong to the Sants. By the Grace of the Sants we meditate on Naam and gain happiness. Except the Sants, there is no real benefactor. Whoever takes shelter with the Sants is taken across by them.

The object of having *Guru* as an ideal is purely spiritual. It is not a doctrine of man-worship. By the Guru, we mean not only the Master in human form, but also in the form of *Shabd*. The body is like a robe, which has to be cast aside both by the disciple and the Master. But blessed is the body, in which He works! We respect it and it should be worshipped. It is also called *Guru*. We have a body and we can be taught only by one having a body. Those who describe the sitting at the feet of a Master as man-worship, do not know the Reality. Even if this criticism is taken as true, it is far better than book-worship or idol-worship. Man

is a conscious being, and only a conscious being can teach another conscious being. Amir Khusro says,

ख़ल्क़ मी गोयद किह् ख़ुसरो बुत परस्ती मी कुनद,
आरे आरे मी कुनम बा ख़ल्क़ो–आलम कार नीस्त।

-- अमीर ख़ुसरो

People say that Khusro is an idol-worshiper; yes, yes, I am. I have nothing to do with the world and its creatures. The devotees of God and worldly-minded persons cannot get along well together. How can those without any Love for the Guru, know what a Guru really is? He is a resplendent sea of the Light of the Lord. The spiritually-minded are dyed in His colour. To understand this secret, one needs to have eyes that can see.

In reality, the *Guru* is not the name of a man. He is a power which is manifested in this body temporarily. He is our true ideal in the light of which true spiritual progress is made. He is full of Radiant Light, like an electric bulb; while it shines, the thought of the structure of the bulb does not enter the mind. The seekers after Spirituality sacrifice themselves like moths over this Divine Light. Kabir Sahib says,

गुरु को मानुष जानते, ते नर मूढ़ गँवार।
भव सागर के भंवर महि, डूबे बारंबार।।
गुरु को मानुष जानते, तन मन अधिक बिकार।
गुरु कीया है देह का, कैसे होय उधार।।
गुरु को मानस जानते, भगति भाव क्या होय।
तरे न तारे आपको, मूढ़ कहावै सोय।।
गुरु मानुष करि जानते, चरनामृत को पान।।
ते नर नरकै जाइंगे, जन्म जन्म ह्वै स्वान।।

-- कबीर साखी संग्रह भाग-1 (गुरुदेव का अंग 31, 32, पृ० 3)

They who consider the Guru to be human are ignorant fools! They sink in the Ocean of the World again and again. They who consider the Guru to be human are deficient in body and mind. They identify the Guru with the body. How can they be redeemed? They who consider the Guru to be human, how can they have any devotion? He is certainly an ignorant one; he cannot cross over, nor can he help others to do so. They who consider the Guru to be human, and consider the Water that has washed

His feet as ordinary water, are surely doomed to a life of hell, and shall wander like stray dogs from birth to birth. (Kabir)

The *Guru* is a Superman, is an Ideal or Spotless Man, and even more than that.

Amongst men the *Guru* is a perfect man. A perfect man is the fulfilment of spiritual evolution in human beings. It is impossible to praise Him adequately. He is possessed of all virtues and is the fountain-head of Spirituality. What ever there is in the universe, is within Him. The virtues of all the regions, from *Sat Lok* (the True Region) down to this world are within Him. They are all manifest in His person. It is difficult to find them elsewhere. It is difficult to swim across the Ocean of the World or to bathe in it at all. Bathing is always done on the beach. The perfect man is like the beach of the Ocean of Life.

You may ask what is special about this perfect man; whence and where from He has come after traversing the various regions? Where is He living? What does He do here? The answer to these questions is that He comes from *Sat Lok* (the True Region). He has come to this Bhu lok (land of death, earth) and lives here. He is manifesting the glory of the Highest Reality. The influences and virtues of the various higher regions are found in Him.

The Lord resides in His heart. The *Guru* manifests in His being the virtues and personality of the Lord. In this worthy man, perfection of personality and perfection of virtues have met at one place. The virtues of Divinity are manifested in Him. If you wish to see God, you should see the *Guru*. According to the Jews, God made man in His own image.

दर बशर रूपोश कर्द अस्त आफ़ताब।

-- मसनवी मौलाना रूमी, निकलसन (2964 दफ़्तर 1, पृ० 182)

He has hidden a sun in the human being. (Maulana Rumi)

When the inner eye is opened, one realises that the Master is the One, before whom all should prostrate them-

selves. He is the life of the universe. He is Truth personified, or Reality in human form. He is of the Truth and reflects the Truth. He is the top of creation. There is no one better than Him. There is no one greater than Him here or hereafter. Both the worlds should bow at His feet. All the good qualities to be found in the Subtle and Causal regions find a place in Him. All virtues are centred in Him. He who has seen Him, has seen the Lord in human form. All the virtues of the Lord are reflected in Him. He is the image of the Lord in this world. He is His viceroy and does His work in this world. His intellect and wisdom are unique, and His judgment is sound and unquestionable. He may not have received an education in any school or college, but He is nevertheless the fountain-head of all learning. He understands its meaning.

Even if you look at Him from the human point of view, He is the most perfect man. He is the source of all virtues. He does not belong to any particular country or nation. He belongs to all countries and nations. He serves all and teaches all. He has love for all. His teachings are for the entire world. He is a citizen of the world. He lives in this world radiating love, and has come here to spread the Light of the Lord as His messenger.

The *Guru* lives like an ordinary human being. He lives in the world, but remains unaffected by it. He treats every one lovingly and sympathetically. His love and care is many times greater than that of a mother. He is a perfect man and has no defects. He takes pity on us despite our faults.

In outward form he is a human being. He is, however, a Superman. He is beyond good and evil, and is the most exalted of men. He is the Lord Himself in human form. He is a mixture of morality and Spirituality. He shows himself powerless, even though he is all-powerful. He is humble in spite of His greatness. The blending of power with solicitude and humility, and of wisdom with love – the ideal which has been placed before the world by Plato and other philosophers, is to be found in a *Satguru* only. In actual fact, the *Guru*

is more than a superman because His reach extends beyond human limits. He works in regions which are not perceptible to our senses. He has access to Subtle and Causal regions, and even beyond. These cannot be perceived by our senses, even with the help of external instruments.

The scientists are unable to see these regions, since it is not possible for them to travel beyond the material universe. They confine their activities to the world of the mind and intellect. They have experimented a great deal and will continue to do so. But there are subtle regions and worlds beyond the reach of the mind, and the regions of pure consciousness lie still higher. The Master travels through these regions every day.

गुरमुखि आवै जाइ निसंगु।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (रामकली म० 1, पृ० 932)

A Gurumukh comes and goes at will.

Those who live according to His Will, can see those regions. But how can we find such a person? *Sant*s and holy men say that all the worlds and regions, the treasure of Spirituality, mercy, knowledge and bliss are inside of man.

घरै अंदरि सभु वथु है बाहरि किछु नाही।।...
बाहरु भाले सु किआ लहै वथु घरै अंदरि भाई।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (आसा म० 3, पृ० 425)

All things are within our home (body); nothing is outside it. How can you find outside what is really inside?

सभ किछु घर महि बाहरि नाही।। बाहरि टोलै सो भरमि भुलाही।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (माझ म० 5, पृ० 102)

Everything is contained within the home of the self; there is nothing beyond. One who searches outside is deluded by doubt.

Everything is inside. Those who know the method of going inside, can find and possess everything.

काइआ अंदरि सभु किछु वसै खंड मंडल पाताला।।
काइआ अंदरि जगजीवन दाता वसै सभना करे प्रतिपाला।।...
काइआ अंदरि रतन पदारथ भगति भरे भंडारा।।
इसु काइआ अंदरि नउखंड पृथमी हाट पटण बाजारा।।

इसु काइआ अंदरि नामु नउ निधि पाईऐ गुर कै सबदि वीचारा।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (सूही म० 3, पृ० 754)

There is everything in the body, vast lands, regions and under-worlds. The life-giver resides in the body, and sustains all. The Treasures of Spirituality are inside the body; the Springs of Devotion are also there. In the body are the Nine Regions of the earth, and all of its crowded commerce. In the body is the Treasure of the Name, but can be found only through Shabd of the Guru.

Hakim Sanai says that in the regions of the soul, there are beautiful heavenly regions and also their rulers. There are many mountains and rivers and seas and deserts in the way of the soul, and these cannot be even imagined. This world is like a piece of seaweed in that ocean of creation.

आसमाँ हास्त दर विलायते जाँ, कार फ़रमाए आसमाने जहाँ।

दर रहे रूह पस्त–ओ बाला हास्त, कोहहाए बलंद व दरिया हास्त।

-- सना'ई साहिब

There are skies in the regions of the soul. Their rulers are also there. On that path there are hills and dales, high mountains and mighty rivers. (Sanai Sahib)

अंदर आं बहर व बीयाबां व जबाल, सकता मे गरदंद ऊहाम व खयाल,

ईं बीयाबां दर बीयाबां हाए हु, हमचू अन्दर बहरे पुर यक तारे मू।

-- मौलाना रूमी

Inside man are seas, deserts and mountains; all faculties of thought and imagination are overwhelmed to stillness seeing them. In the vast empty space, this earth would look like a thin hair in the full-flooded ocean. (Maulana Rumi)

The human body is an epitome of the universe. It is the microcosm. One who knows it knows the universe.

जो ब्रहमंडे सोई पिंडे जो खोजै सो पावै।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (पीपा धनासरी, पृ० 695)

That which is in the macrocosm, is also in the microcosm. He who seeks alone finds. (Pipa)

The human body is a microcosm, which is an epitome of the macrocosm. If we know the body, we know the universe also. But ordinarily we see only the external appear-

ance of the universe, and not the inner reality. In a way, we water the leaves of a tree, and not the roots. The roots of the tree of creation are in subtle regions to which we can gain access only by searching inside ourselves. We have, however, never done so. Emerson says, "Tap inside." All the *Sant*s lay stress on this point. How we can go inside, is explained by the Masters, and this has been explained at another place in this book.

*Sant*s and holy men are scientists of those regions, the bliss of which, can be experienced only by the soul. They say that the gross physical universe is full of suffering, but that beyond it, are numerous subtle and causal regions which are full of Light and nothing but Light. *Satgurus* visit these regions at will every day and testify to the existence of these worlds. Those who visit the laboratories of the *Sant*s, see them (just as we see the gross Physical world) and experience it as a certainty, in the same way that two and two make four.

Gurus come from *Sach Khand* under the Orders of the Lord for taking back the souls. They are Free from the Bondage of Body and Mind.

Our soul is a particle of God, but it has been imprisoned in the cage of the body and mind. *Sant*s come from the original home, which is the true home of all the souls, so that they may take souls back and unite them with the Lord. The Lord Himself, according to whose orders the souls come into the world, comes in the form of the Master and says,

जिनि तुम भेजे तिनहि बुलाए सुख सहज सेती घरि आउ।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (धनासरी म० 5, पृ० 678)

He who sent you here, now calls you back. Come home to this land of calm, which no winds of passions can ruffle.

The Masters are one with the Lord. They come here simply to redeem the souls. In the hymns of all the holy men, it is said that the Masters come to the world with the mission of redeeming the souls. Shams-i-Tabriz says,

तु चिह् दानी किह् मा चिह् मूर्ग़ानेम, हर नफ़्स ज़ेरे लब चिह् मेख़्वानेम।
गर बसूरत गदाए ईं कुएम, बसिफ़त बीं कि मा चिह् सुलतानेम।
गरचिह् मा मुफ़लिसेम दर ज़ाहिर, तू ब–बातन निगर किह् मा कानेम।
चूँकि मा ख़ुद शहीम दर हमा मिसर, चिह् ग़म इमरोज़ गर बज़िंदानेम।
कै बमानेम अन्दरीं खाना, चूँ दरीं ख़ाना जुमला मिहमानेम।
क़ौल–हा करदा एम बा शह ख़्वेश, हेच ज़–आं क़ौल रू न गरदानेम।
ता दरीं ख़िरक़ा एम अज़ कस मा, हम नरंजेम ओ हम नरंजानेम।
हमचू फ़िरदौस पुर ज़ नूर ओ नईम, ख़ुरम ओ ख़ुशदिलेम व ख़ंदानेम।

-- कुल्लियाते-शम्स तब्रेज़ (पृ० 876)

You do not know what kind of birds we are, or what we are reciting silently.
We are apparently beggars in this world; find the Reality and you will see that we are kings.
We appear to be poor, but if you look into our hearts you will find what Treasures we have.
Since we are kings in our own land, what does it matter if we are in prison here for a while?
How can we live forever in this house? All of us are guests in this house.
We have made promises to our king; and we shall not go back on our promises.
As long as we are wearing this mantle (of human body), we do not grieve, nor cause grief to anyone.
We are full of Light and blessing as in Heaven we eat, make merry and laugh.

Guru Gobind Singh, similarly, says,

इह बिधि करत तपिसआ भयो।। द्वै ते एक रूप ह्वै गयो।।
चित न भयो हमरो आवन कहि।। चुभी रही स्रुति प्रभु चरनन महि।।
जिउ तिउ प्रभ हम को समझायो।। इम किह कै लोकि पठायो।।

-- दसम ग्रन्थ (बचित्र नाटक 3,5)

In this manner, my meditation reached its zenith and I became One with the Omnipresent Lord. I had no desire to come into this world, but the Lord so willed it thus and sent me to this world. (SriDasam.org p.53)

Kabir Sahib also says,

कहे कबीर हम धुर के भेदी, लाये हुकम हजूरी।

-- संत कबीर

O Kabir, we are familiar with the secret of the Lord's Mansion; we have come here, as ordered.

The reason for *Gurus*' coming to the world.

The *Guru*s come to the world for our good. They leave their bliss and come to the Land of Death in order to emancipate souls engulfed in the darkness of *Maya* and the snares of *Kaal*, and take them back. They assume human bodies and move about in the world, in the same way as we do.

They are free from birth and death and are immortal. The aim of their lives is to lead us to the spiritual path and to unite us with the Lord in the highest spiritual regions within us.

जनम मरण दुहहू महि नाही जन परउपकारी आए।।
जीअ दानु दे भगती लाइनि हरि सिउ लैनि मिलाए।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (सूही म० 5, पृ० 749)

They are free from birth and death; they have come for the good of the people. They give Light and teach Devotion; they Unite us with the Lord.

There is a great difference between our coming and their coming into the world. The convicts and the doctor who looks after their health, both visit the prison. The former go there to undergo imprisonment for their misdeeds, while the latter goes there to treat them. We come here to work out the consequences of our karmas, or good and bad acts, but the Masters come here to redeem us.

There are many kinds of good deeds done by people that are of help to others; but the good deed done by the Master is of the highest degree. He takes us out of the prison of *Kaal* and the deceit of *Maya*, and unites us with the Lord.

As an illustration, let us say that there is a big prison in which there are eighty-four lakh (8,400,000) cells for different kinds of prisoners. There is only one door by which to get

out. A bald-headed blind man wants to get out of the prison and goes around feeling along the wall with his hands. Whenever he comes near the door, however, his bald head itches, and he takes his hands off the wall to scratch his head. While he is doing this, he passes by the door and again goes the round of the eighty-four lakh cells.

A social worker takes pity on the prisoners and serves them with milk. That is a good deed, and they are pleased for the moment. Another kind person brings them sweets to eat. They are again pleased and are happy for a short while. A third person supplies them well-made clothes, and their bodies are properly clothed for some time. In spite of all these good deeds, they however, still continue to remain prisoners. Another person, the *Guru*, comes, along with a bunch of keys in His hand. He opens the door, releases the prisoners and sends them home. All of these helpful persons did good acts, but the best act is the one done by the last person.

There are many kinds of good actions in this world, but in spite of them all, we are not freed from the cage of the body and the mind. The Master comes to the world, which is a prison with eighty-four lakh cells. He sets us free and takes us home. His act is the best, the really helpful act. His purpose is to give life and to free souls from the prison of eight-four lakh cells and take them to the Lord.

The Work of a *Guru.*

A Master is a donor, and not a beggar. His benevolence is for all, whether rich or poor. He feels happy in rescuing souls from physical bondage. The *Sant*s may be in any garb; but they work only for the good of the soul and for its spiritual evolution. They do not found any new religion or creed, nor do they interfere with the rites and rituals of prevailing religions. They do not believe in blind faith, and they do not ask anybody to believe blindly. They speak of a faith that can be tested right here and now, on the counter, as it were. They

do not promise release or emancipation after death only. All that they say is meant for all and is open to inquiry – it is the message of the wide, open road.

जब लग न देखूँ अपनी नैणी। तब लग न पतीजूँ गुरु की बैणी।।

-- स्वामी जी महाराज, सार-बचन छंद बंद

Unless I see with my own eyes, I believe not in the words of the Master. (Swami Ji Maharaj)

It is true that we have to rely on the Master to enable us to experiment; but when we realise the truth of his teachings through our own experience, we become steadfast in the faith which cannot be shaken even by the opposition of the whole world. One sees the sun rise. If hundreds of bats should swear that there is no sun, one's belief would not be disturbed, because one has seen the sun rise with one's own eyes. Those whose inner eye has not opened remain deprived of this truth.

Whenever a Master appears in this world, seekers for the real truth are attracted towards Him like moths, and like bees they hover round that living flower of Spirituality and enjoy its taste. They are attracted towards Him as the moon-bird is attracted to the moon in the sky. They cannot endure separation even for a moment. Because of the Divine Power of the Master, souls are attracted towards Him, and the fire of steadfast love and devotion is awakened in them. This love and devotion is the means of making the disciple a recipient of the Lord's Mercy and of taking him to the Pristine Home.

The Master sees only the inner condition, and not the external condition, religion or nationality of the disciples. Whomsoever He deems fit, He initiates in the inner path, and declines others whom He finds unprepared. What touchstone He uses for the purpose, is known to Him alone. But He can see the seekers' *sanskar*as (effects of past karmas) as clearly as one can see pickles or jam in a glass jar; ordinary persons cannot see them.

The Master, through His Divine Powers, imparts teachings to the seekers after truth, whether they be near or far,

and can reveal Himself to them without writing or speaking to them.

Whoever is taken by the *Sant*s under their protection is stamped with the seal of the Lord's Mercy. He is saved from *Kaal* and his hard reckoning. He is free of *Kaal*'s demands on his upward journey.

जेजीआ डंनु को लए न जगाति।। सतिगुरि करि दीनी धुर की छाप।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (आसा म० 5, पृ० 430)

No punitive taxes or customs duties have to be paid; the Master stamps His disciples with His own Divine Seal.

नानक जिन्ह कउ सतिगुरु मिलिआ तिन्ह का लेखा निबडिया।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (आसा म० 3, पृ० 435)

O Nanak, those who have met the True Guru, have their accounts settled.

जिन कउ सतिगुरु भेटिआ तिना विटहु बलि जाउ।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (प्रभाती म० 3, पृ० 1347)

I am sacrifice to those who meet the True Guru.

Whenever Masters manifest themselves in the world, they teach by their own living example, and open the flood-gates of Spirituality. Those who act upon their teachings, benefit from them. Those who meet them, feel elevated and purified. A beneficial current flows from them. Sufferers are relieved of their sufferings by the mere touch of their robes.

The Duties of a *Guru.*

Infinite are the duties of a *Guru*.. One of His prime duties is to mend the broken souls or to unite the separated souls with the Lord. This, He does with the help of *Naam* or *Shabd*, the Divine Sound. He enables the soul to ride on the Sound Current to its Pristine Home. This *Shabd*, like radio-waves, is all-pervasive; but we cannot perceive it owing to *Maya*. The *Guru*, however, frees souls from the bondage of attachment and *Maya* by means of the Divine Sound or *Shabd*. One may become familiar with the teachings

of the *Sant*s, but mere intellectual knowledge, without the help of the *Guru*, cannot free one from bondage.

The primary duty of the *Guru* is to prepare the disciple and then to take him to the Court of the Lord. The Master takes the responsibility for those, who take shelter with Him. To take care of spiritual seekers, Masters come to this world again and again and show them the spiritual path.

सतिगुर सानि पए से थापे तिन राखन कउ प्रभू आवैगो।।
जे को सरु जन ऊपरि फिरि उलटो तिसै लगावैगो।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (कानड़ा म० 4, पृ० 1311)

Those who seek refuge with the Master, the Lord comes to protect them. He who shoots an arrow at them, finds that the arrow turns around and hits him.

The Masters, like shepherds, have many sheep to look after. But they shower light on the entire world. All those who have association with them, become entitled to cross the ocean of existence.

The *Guru* is the Manifestation of the Lord.

The Lord is unfathomable and unknowable, but He is manifested in the Master. The Master manifests His Glory. The Lord has locked the inner door in our body and is sitting behind it. He Himself takes on the form of a man and carries the key to open the door.

The form which He takes is particularly loved by us, and this form should be worshipped by us. The glory of the Lord shines through the Master. He takes the human form outwardly and lives amongst us. Having a body like us, He undergoes pain and pleasure like us. Therefore the visible form of the Lord, seen by our eyes, is dearer to us than the original and invisible form of the Lord.

The Master is not distinguishable from the Lord. He is one with Him. How, then, can one be greater than the other? In fact, *Sant*s and the Lord are not different. The Master is a blessing for this world. Maulana Rumi says,

चूँ कि करदी ज़ाते–मुर्शिद रा क़बूल, हम ख़ुदा दर ज़ातश आमद हम रसूल।
-- कितबुल-बैअत (पृ० 8)

दो मदाँ व दो मबीं व दो मखाँ, ख़्वाजह रा दर ख़्वाजाए ख़ुद महव दाँ।
गर जुदा बीनी ज़ हक़ ईं, ख़्वाजा रा, गुम कुनी हम तन व हम दीबाजा रा।
-- मसनवी मौलाना रूमी (दफ़्तर 6, पृ० 309)

पीर व हक़ रा दो ज़ अहवली हर कि दीद, ऊ मरीद अस्त दर हक़ीक़त नै मुरीद।
-- कितबुल-बैअत (पृ० 8)

When you accept the Master, realise that in His person are included the Lord and the Prophet. Do not consider them to be different. Do not look at them as different beings, and do not talk of them as being separate. Consider the Master as one who is merged in the Lord. If you have a defect in your eye, the Master and the Lord will appear to be different; and you will lose both yourself and the Reality of Spirituality. He who regards the Lord and the Master as separate, is a dead body and not a disciple.

Do not think of them as two; do not see them as two. Do not say that they are two. Know that the Master is merged in the Lord. If you consider the Master to be distinct from the Lord, you are ignorant of the soul and substance of this knowledge. If owing to a defect in his eyes, a man sees the Master and the Lord as separate, he is really a dead person (*murd*) and not a disciple (*murid*).

The Master is that form of the Lord, which can be seen. We can, in His company, visit all regions (Gross, Subtle and Causal and those beyond). The Lord Himself is, however, different from all forms.

A point that should be considered is whether this form of the Master, which accompanies the disciple in this world and in the spiritual regions is better than the form which is indescribable, unfathomable and unknowable, and which is not as yet known to the disciple.

The Master is God-in-man, a God-man or Man-in-God. All the qualities from *Sat Lok*, the True Region to *Bhu Lok*, the created world, are to be found in Him. He helps the disciple in every region. He reigns over every region with a glory and splendour that is unique. He sustains the devotion

of the disciple. He is the Supreme Lord in the human form. The Master is God-in-man, an incarnation of the Immortal One. He is the greatest of all. Although the Lord, like electricity, pervades everywhere, the Master is the point where He shines out as light.

The Supreme Lord comes to us in the form of a Master. He knows and feels our sufferings and loves us. Where is the Lord? We can see Him in the radiant and glorious form of the Master and nowhere else. Unless we reach the regions of pure consciousness beyond the reach of the mind, senses and intellect, we cannot see the Lord. In this world, the Lord is merely an idea for us; we are simply clinging to a mental idea of Him. But this becomes manifest in the Master. He lives amongst us and we can see Him.

The Word was made flesh and dwelt amongst us. (Bible, John 1:14)

Unless we meet the living Lord (the Master) we cannot know the Supreme Lord. We are living in the gross material world. We want a God who will reveal Himself. Man teaches man. Affinity between similar things is natural. We need the Lord's conscious self to be manifested so that we may know Him.

Shabd or Divine Creative Sound takes bodily form, connects us with itself, and unites us with the Lord. It is a link between us and the Lord. At one end it merges in the Lord, and at the other end it is one with His creation. The human form of the Lord serves as a great link.

Maulana Rumi says that we should sit at the feet of a person who knows our heart, who can understand our difficulties and sufferings, who can share our sorrow and who can remove it. We should sit in the shade of a tree bearing fresh flowers and fruit, which will refresh our mind and heart, and from which we will get the fruit of spiritual life to eat. We should not aimlessly wander around in the streets of this world like vagabonds, but should sit at some place where we can have the Lord's Nectar. The Masters are the keepers of this Nectar, and they can share this wealth with anyone. They are agents of the Lord through whom the Lord distributes His Wealth.

दिला नज़्दे–कसे ब नशीं कि ऊ अज़ दिल ख़बर दारद,
बज़ेरे–आँ दरख़्ते रौ किह् अज़ गुलहाय तर दारद।
दरीं बाज़ारे–अत्ताराँ मरौ हर सू चू बेकाराँ,
ब–दुकाने कसे ब–नशीं किह् दर दुकान शकर दारद।

-- दीवाने-शम्स तब्रेज़ (पृ० 128)

O heart! Sit by one who knows the Inner Sound. Take shelter under the tree that has fresh flowers. Do not loiter aimlessly in this market of merchants, but sit at the shop which deals in honey.

As long as you are in this world, He will be with you, whether you are in jungles, mountains or deserts, and He will be with you in pains and pleasures. He will also be with you in the Subtle and Causal regions and even beyond, both when you die while living, to leave the body during meditation, and after your physical death.

दामने–ऊ गीर ऐ यारे–दलेर, कू मुनज़्ज़ा बाशद अज़ बाला ओ ज़ेर।
बा तू बाशद दर मकानो–ला–मकान, चूँ बिमानी अज़ सरा ओ अज़ दुकान।

-- मसनवी मौलाना रूमी ;दफ़्तर 3, पृ० 45)

O brave friend! Catch hold of the Master's garment, for He is above all ups and downs. He will be with you both here and hereafter, whether you are in this world of mind and matter, or beyond.

The form of God-in-man, which frees us from the bondage of time and *Maya*, and takes us out of darkness and helps us in all the inner regions, is far better than the Lord held in our mind simply as an idea. The Master is the incarnation of the Lord. We bow to many gods such as *Brahma, Vishnu, Shankar, Ishwar, Parameshwar, Paar Brahm, Sohang, Sat Naam* and *Anaami*. We read about them in our religious books. They are all our imaginary ideals and are mentioned in stories. But when we realise the Master's Form, it shows us the relative importance of all these deities.

Unless we meet a Perfect Master, we cannot know the lower value of these gods. They have always been in existence, but a Master is necessary to make their value known. The Lord assumes the human form and informs us about His

own Being. Guru Amardas accordingly says that it has been ordained from the beginning that one cannot meditate on the Lord except through a Master.

धुरि खसमै का हुकमु पइया विणु सतिगुर चेतिआ न जाइ।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (बिहागड़ा की वार म० 3, पृ० 556)

It has been ordained by the Lord since the beginning: No one can know Him without a Master.

The Master is greater than the Lord is the conclusion one comes to when one thinks deeply.

By remembering the Lord, you will remain in this world; but by remembering the *Guru*, you will travel above and beyond it. Kabir Sahib says,

गुरु बड़ गोबिंद तें, मन में देखु बिचार।
हरि सुमिरै सो वार है, गुरु सुमिरै सो पार।।

-- कबीर साखी संग्रह भाग-1 (गुरुदेव का अंग 34, पृ० 4)

The Master is greater than the Lord; this is the result of careful thought. Meditate on the Lord and you will remain here; meditate on the Master and you will rise above the world.

The Lord has always been inside us, and yet we have had to be born hundreds of times. When we meet the Master, we are connected with *Naam* and are freed from birth and death. Unless we are connected with God-in-man (*Guru*) and God-in-action (*Shabd*), we cannot cross the Ocean of Existence; mere mental meditation does not help. The only means of "crossing over" is *Shabd*.

बिन सबदे पारु न पाए कोई।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (मारू म० 3, पृ० 1068)

None can cross over without Shabd.

Shabd is manifested in the Master, and it is only through His Grace, that it can dwell in us.

कबीर ते नर अंध हैं, गुरु को कहते और।
हरि के रूठे ठौर है, गुरु रूठे नहीं ठौर।।

-- कबीर साखी संग्रह भाग-1 (गुरुदेव का अंग 33, पृ० 4)

Those who do not realise who the Guru is, are blind. There is some help to be had if the Lord is displeased; but there is no help if the Master is displeased. (Kabir)

If the Lord is displeased, we can seek the help of the Master. The Lord can be appeased through Him. But if the Master is displeased, what shelter can a disciple have? The Lord is not visible and if the disciple has fallen out with the person in whom He is manifested, which way will he turn for help? The scriptures say the same thing:

शिवे रुष्टे गुरुस्त्राता, गुरै रुष्टे न काश्चन।

If the Lord (Shiva) is displeased, the Master protects us; but if the Master is displeased then there is no one to protect us.

In this connection Sahjo Bai says,

हरि किरपा जे होय तो, नहीं होय तो नाहिं।।
पै गुर किरपा दया बिनु, सकल बुद्धि बहि जाहिं।।

-- सहजोबाई की वाणी (11, पृ० 3)

If the Lord is pleased, it is good; but if He is not, it does not matter. But without the Grace of the Master even our intellect misleads, since without Him, there is no method of realising the Lord.

राम तजूं पै गुरु न बिसारूँ।। गुरु के सम हरि कूं न निहारूँ।।
हरि ने जनम दियो जग माहीं।। गुरु ने आवागमन छुटाहीं।।
हरि ने पाँच चोर दिए साथा।। गुरु ने लीन छुटाय अनाथा।।
हरि ने कुटुंब जाल में गेरी।। गुरु ने काटी ममता बेरी।।
हरि ने रोग भोग उरझायौ।। गुरु जोगी कर सबै छुटायौ।।
हरि ने करम भरम भरमायो।। गुरु ने आतम रूप लखायो।।
हरि ने मो सूं आप छिपायो।। गुरु दीपक दे ताहि दिखायो।।
फिर हरि बंध मुकति गति लाए।। गुर ने सभ ही भरम मिटाए।।
चरनदास पर तन मन वारूँ।। गुरु न तजूँ हरि कूं तजि डारुं।।

-- सहजोबाई की बानी भाग-1 (हरि ते गुरु की विशेषता, पृ० 6)

I can give up the Lord, but I will not give up the Master. I do not consider the Lord equal to His manifested form (God-in-man). There are several reasons for this:

God created the universe and gave me birth; but the Master released me from birth and death.

God set five thieves after me; but the Master, considering me to be helpless, protected me from them.

God involved me in the attachment to my family; but the Master broke these chains.

God involved me in disease and suffering; but the Master made me a yogi and released me from them.
God involved me in meritorious deeds and actions; but the Master showed me my Real self.
God concealed Himself from me; but the Master gave me the Lamp of Knowledge and showed God to me.
God created the conditions of bondage and release in this world; but the Master cleared-away all my doubts about release and bondage.
I will sacrifice my mind and body at the feet of my Guru, Charandas. I would give up the Lord, but would never give up the Master.

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CHARACTERISTICS OF A MASTER
(*Guru ke Lakshan* गुरु के लक्षण)

Guru - The Master.

- He is born in a particular country, and yet, He belongs to the people of all the countries.

Because He has a certain form, He belongs to a particular country, but He is free from the bondage of body. He can travel in the higher regions at His pleasure. He is a Master and a manifestation of *Shabd*. He belongs to all. He is One with the Lord. He is present everywhere. He remains constantly with the disciple and helps him. He reveals Himself within the disciple.

गुरु परमेसरु एकु है सभ महि रहिआ समाइ।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (सिरीराग म० 5, पृ० 53)

The Guru and the Transcendent Lord are one and the same, pervading and permeating amongst all.

सो सतिगुरु पिआरा मेरै नालि है जिथै किथै मैनो लए छडाई।।
तिसु गुर कउ साबासि है जिनि हरि सोझी पाई।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (वडहंस की की वार म० 3, पृ० 588)

The Beloved True Master is always with me. Wherever I may be, He will save me. Most blessed is that Guru, who imparts understanding of the Lord to us.

सफल मूरति गुर मेरै माथै।। जत कत पेखत तत तत साथै।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (देवगंधारी म० 5, पृ० 535)

The beneficent form of the Master is in my forehead; wherever I look I see it with me.

- He is Immortal. He is the Helper of the Helpless and Supporter of the Supportless.

थिरु नाराइणु थिरु गुरू थिरु साचा बीचारु।।
सुरि नर नाथह नाथु तू निधारा आधारु।।
सरबे थान थन्नतरी तू दाता दातारु।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (रामकली ओंकार म० 1, पृ० 934)

Eternal is the Lord; Eternal is the Master; Eternal is the True Wisdom. He is the Lord of gods; He is the Lord of men; He is the helper of the helpless; He looks after those who have no other support. In all places and interspaces, He is the Giver, the Great Giver.

- The Lord Himself Knows His Mysterious Ways or the *Guru* does.

धनु धरणीधरु आपि अजोनी तोलि बोलि सचु पूरा।।
करते की मिति करता जाणै कै जाणै गुरु सूरा।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (रामकली ओंकार म० 1, पृ० 930)

I pay homage to the Creator of the world; He is unborn; His Laws and justice are perfect and fair. The Creator Himself knows the reasons for creation; the other one who knows is the mighty Master.

- He is Unerring.

All human beings make mistakes; it is a part of their nature. But the Master is human in form only. Inwardly, He is One with the Lord. Like the Lord, He is faultless.

भुलण अंदरि सभु को अभुलु गुरू करतारु।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (सिरीराग म० 1, पृ० 61)

All commit mistakes, except the Lord and the Master.

- Undoubtedly He can Lead us to Union with God.

He accompanies us on our inward and upward journey, and shows us all the regions, whether Subtle or Causal, and takes us to the Pristine Home.

मरत पइआल अकासु दिखाइओ गुरि सतिगुरि किरपा धारी जीउ।।
सो ब्रहमु अजोनी है भी होनी घट भीतरि देखु मुरारी जीउ।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (सोरठ म० 1, पृ० 597)

The Master was kind to me. He showed me the Land of Death. He showed me the Under-world. He showed me the Subtle world. He is 'Brahma'; He is Unborn; He is; He shall be. He is found in the heart.

- He is the Greatest of the great. There is no one Higher than Him. He can do whatever He Wishes.

मेरे मन गुर जेवडु अवरु न कोइ।।
दूजा थाउ न को सुझै गुर मेले सचु सोइ।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (सिरीराग म० 5, पृ० 49)

O mind, dwell on the Master; no one is equal to Him. I know no one else; the Master unites us with the Lord.

गुरु करता गुरु करणहारु गुरमुखि सची सोइ।।
गुर ते बाहरि किछु नही गुरु कीता लोडे सु होइ।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (सिरीराग म० 5, पृ० 52)

The Master is the creator; the Master is the sustainer. His words are true, and nothing is beyond His power. Whatever He wills, happens according to His wish.

- The Lord Redeems all the Disciples of the Perfect Master.

सतिगुरू का खडगु संजोउ हरि भगति है जितु कालु कंटकु मारि विडारिआ।।
सतिगुरू का रखणहारा हरि आपि है सतिगुरू कै पिछै हरि सभि उबारिआ।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (गउड़ी म० 4, पृ० 312)

Knowledge is the Master's weapon; Devotion is His sword and coat-of-arms; therewith He vanquishes Kaal, the devouring monster. The Lord is the protector of the Master, and the Lord redeems all, when the Master so desires.

- He is the True King. He is the Lord of *Amrit*, Nectar of Immortality, and Devotion.

हरि अंमृत भगति भंडार है गुर सतिगुर पासे राम राजे।।
गुरु सतिगुरु सचा साहु है सिख देइ हरि रासे।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (आसा म० 4, पृ० 449)

The Lord is the Treasure-house of devotion and ambrosia, and He dwells in the Master. The Master is the True Lord of Treasury; He fills the coffers of His disciples with the wealth of Godliness.

- He is a Jeweller.

The Master is the great jeweller; the ruby of *Naam* is His stock-in-trade. He can manifest *Naam*, and thereby redeem the disciple.

रतनु जवेहरु लालु हरि नामा गुरि काढि तली दिखलाइआ।।
भागहीण मनमुखि नही लीआ तृण ओलै लाखु छपाइआ।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (रामकली म० 4, पृ० 880)

The Lord's Naam is both a ruby and a diamond; the Master manifests it. The self-seekers are unfortunate indeed, not to know what a treasure lies hidden in the straw (human body).

आपु वीचारै सु परखे हीरा।। एक दृसठि तारे गुर पूरा।।
गुरु मानै मन ते मनु धीरा।। ऐसा साहु सराफी करै।।
साची नदरि एक लिव तरै।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (आसा म० 1, पृ० 413)

He who reflects on the self, recognises the diamond. The Perfect Master gives a single glance, and thereby redeems the disciple. The disciple accepts the Master; and his mind is stilled. Such is our Master, of royal state, and a perfect connoisseur of jewels, that at a single loving glance He discerns the jewel within us and redeems it.

- He has the Key to the Temple of God.

सोहंदडो हभ ठाइ कोइ न दिसै डूजडो।।
खुल्डे कपाट नानक सतिगुर भेटते।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (सिरीराग म० 5, पृ० 80)

I see nothing, but that which is clothed in beauty, bright and joyous; I see none but that which is a part of myself, not apart; for by the Grace of the Master all doors have been opened to me.

बिनु सबदै अंतरि आनेरा।। न वसतु लहै न चूकै फेरा।।
सतिगुर हथि कुंजी होरतु दरु खुलै नाही गुरु पूरै भागि मिलावणिआ।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (माझ म० 3, पृ० 124)

Where Shabd is absent, darkness abounds; nothing is gained there, and coming and going does not cease. The Master has the key; no one else can open the door. When one is fortunate, one meets a geuine Master.

गुरु कुंजी पाहू निवलु मनु कोठा तनु छति।।
नानक गुर बिनु मन का ताकु न उघडै अवर न कुंजी हथि।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (सारंग की वार म० 2, पृ० 1237)

The Master has the key; the body is a room; the mind is the ceiling. O Nanak, without the Guru, the door of the mind cannot be opened, for no one else has the key.

- He is the True place of Pilgrimage.

जै अगै तीरथु होइ ता मलु लहै छपडि नातै सगवी मलु लाए।।
तीरथु पूरा सतिगुरू जो अनदिनु हरि हरि नामु धिआए।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (माझ की वार म० 4, पृ० 140)

Bathing in a pool of holy water, one is washed clean of filth. But, by bathing in a stagnant pond, one is contaminated with even more filth. The Master is the true place of pilgrimage, the perfect pool of Holy Water; for night and day, He meditates on the Name of the Lord, Hari, Hari.

नानक गुर समानि तीरथु नही कोई साचे गुर गोपाला।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (आसा म० 1, पृ० 437)

There is no place of pilgrimage equal to a Master; for a True Master is the Lord Himself.

गुरु दरीआउ सदा जलु निरमलु मिलिआ दुरमति मैलु हरै।।
सतिगुरि पाइऐ पूरा नावणु पसू परेतहू देव करै।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (प्रभाती म० 1, पृ० 1329)

The Master is a River of Purity; bathing in it rids one of sins. Finding the True Guru, the perfect cleansing bath is obtained, which transforms even beasts and ghosts into gods.

- He is the Pool and Source of the Nectar of Immortal Life.

अंमृत सरु सतिगुरु सतिवादी जितु नातै कऊआ हंसु होहै।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (गूजरी म० 4, पृ० 493)

The Master is a Pool of Nectar, the Fountain of Truth. When a crow bathes in it, it turns into a swan.

गुरु सरवरु मान सरोवरु है वडभागी पुरख लहंनि।।
सेवक गुरमुखि खोजिआ से हंसुले नामु लहंनि।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (सूही म० 3, पृ० 757)

The Master is a Pool of Nectar, and the fortunate ones bathe in It. The seekers come to the Master, as swans come to the pool.

गुरदेव तीरथु अंमृत सरोवरु गुर गिआन मजनु अपरंपरा।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (गउड़ी बावन आखरी म० 4, पृ० 250)

The Divine Guru is the sacred shrine of pilgrimage and the pool of Divine Ambrosia. Bathing in the Guru's wisdom, one experiences the Infinite.

- He is the Philosopher's Stone.

हम नीच मैले अति अभिमानी दूजै भाइ विकार।।
गुरि पारसि मिलिऐ कंचनु होए निरमल जोति अपार।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (आसा म० 3, पृ० 427)

We are vile and sinful men of ego, suffering from the illusion of duality; but when we meet the Master, who is the Philosopher's Stone, we are turned into gold, and the infinite, pure Light fills us.

मनूरै ते कंचन भए भाई गुरु पारसु मेलि मिलाइ।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (सोरठ म० 3, पृ० 638)

The Master is the Philosopher's Stone. After meeting Him, the rusted, iron-like mind is turned into gold.

मनु सतिगुर सरनि धिआवैगो।।
लोहा हिरनु होवै संगि पारस गुनु पारस को होइ आवैगो।।
सतिगुरु महा पुरखु है पारसु जो लागै सो फलु पावैगो।।
जिउ गुर उपदेसि तरे प्रहिलादा गुरु सेवक पैज रखावैगो।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (कानड़ा म० 4, पृ० 1311)

When iron contacts the Philosopher's Stone, it acquires its qualities, and turns into gold. The Master is the Philosopher's Stone; he who meets Him is benefitted. Just as Prahlaad was saved by the Guru's Teachings, the Guru protects the honour of His devotees.

- He has Controlled the Five Enemies, namely: Lust, Anger, Greed, Worldly Attachment and Pride or Ego.

Being one with the Lord, the Master becomes free from all mental defects.

सो सतिगुरु जि सचु धिआइदा सचु सचा सतिगुरु इके।।
सोई सतिगुरु पुरखु है जिनि पंजे दूत कीते वसि छिके।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (गउड़ी की वार म० 4, पृ० 304)

The Master meditates on Truth; Truth and the Master are One. He is the Perfect Master who has controlled the five senses.

- He is Free from Enmity. He is above Pain and Pleasure, Good and Evil.

Like the Lord Himself, He is without ill-will and wishes well to all.

सतिगुरु निरवैरु पुत्र सत्र समाने अउगुण कटे करे सुधु देहा।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (रामकली की वार म० 5, पृ० 960)

The Master is free from enmity; He treats all as God's sons. He removes our defects, and purifies our bodies.

He is not grieved by suffering; He is not elated by happiness. He remains unperturbed. He transcends pain and pleasure and remains immersed in *Naam*. Poison or nectar, whatever comes in His contact, is filled with His sweetness; they do not affect Him.

- He is Always Merciful.

सतिगुरु दाता दइआलु है जिसनो दइआ सदा होइ।।
सतिगुरु अंदरहु निरवैरु है सभु देखै ब्रहमु इकु सोइ।।
निरवैरा नालि जि वैरु चलाइदे तिन विचहु तिसटिआ न कोइ।।
सतिगुरु सभना दा भला मनाइदा तिस दा बुरा किउ होइ।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (गउड़ी की वार म० 4, पृ० 302)

The Master is merciful and bountiful; He is always compassionate. The Master is free from enmity; He sees the Lord in all. He seeks the good of everyone; and wishes ill to none.

सतिगुरू सदा दइआलु है भाई विणु भागा किआ पाईऐ।।
एक नदरि करि वेखै सभ ऊपरि जेहा भाउ तेहा फलु पाईऐ।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (सोरठ म० 3, पृ० 602)

The Master is always merciful. We get nothing but what we deserve. He looks after all with the same kindness; and we receive His Grace according to the measure of our love. O Nanak, when

Naam, the Name of the Lord dwells within the mind, self-conceit is eradicated from within.

सतिगुरु सिख की करै प्रतिपाल।। सेवक कउ गुरु सदा दइआल।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (गउड़ी सुखमनी म० 5, पृ० 286)

The Master protects the disciple; He is always kind to those, who serve His Will.

- He Forgives the Sinners and Backbiters.

सतिगुर बाझहु मुकति किनेही।। ओहु आदि जुगादी राम सनेही।।
दरगह मुकति करे करि किरपा बखसे अवगुण कीना हे।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (मारू म० 1, पृ० 1027)

Without the True Guru, how can anyone be liberated? From the very beginning of time, and all throughout the ages, He has been Friend of the Lord. By His Grace, He grants liberation; Sinners are forgiven in His Court.

जिनी डिठा मेरा सतिगुरु भाउ करि तिन के सभि पाप गवाई।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (गउड़ी की वार म० 4, पृ० 310)

To those, who meet the Master, all sins are forgiven.

जे कोई निंद करे हरि जन की अपुना गुनु न गवावै।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (बैराड़ी म० 4, पृ० 719)

Even if someone slanders the Lord's humble slave, he does not give up his own goodness.

कोई निंदकु होवै सतिगुरू का फिरि सरणि गुर आवै।।
पिछले गुनह सतिगुरु बखसि लए सतसंगति नालि रलावै।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (बिलावल की वार म० 3, पृ० 855)

He who slanders the Master, but later takes shelter with Him, is forgiven for his sin. The Master admits him to His Holy Company.

- He is an Intercessor and Unites the Separated Souls with the Lord.

घोलि घुमाई तिसु मित्र विचोले जै मिलि कंतु पछाणा।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (रामकली की वार म० 5, पृ० 964)

May I be a sacrifice unto the Friend, by meeting whom I meet the Lord.

जैसा सतिगुरु सुणीदा तैसो ही मै डीठु।।
विछुडिआ मेले प्रभू हरि दरगह का बसीठु।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (रामकली की वार म० 5, पृ० 957)

As I had heard about the Master, so I found Him to be. He unites the separated souls with the Lord; He is the Intercessor at the Court of the Lord.

- He is the Driver of the Elephant-like Mind of the Disciple.

मनु कुंचरु पीलकु गुरू गिआनु कुंडा जह खिंचे तह जाइ।।
नानक हसती कुंडे बाहरा फिरि फिरि उझडि पाइ।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (गूजरी की वार म० 3, पृ० 516)

The mind is the elephant, and the Master is the driver. His wisdom is the goad, and the mind does as He directs. The mind needs the goad always; for without the goad, it strays.

कबीर काइआ कजली बनु भइआ मनु कुंचरु मय मंतु।।
अंकसु ग्यानु रतनु है खेवटु बिरला संतु।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (सलोक भगत कबीर, पृ० 1376)

O Kabir, the body is like a forest, and the mind is like an elephant in rut. Wisdom is the goad, and the driver is the Sant.

- He is the Great Boatsman.

सतिगुरू है बोहिथा सबदि लंघावणहारु।।
तिथै पवणु ना पावको ना जलु ना आकारु।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (मारू म० 1, पृ० 1009)

The Master is the boatman, and the boat of Shabd takes us across to land where there is no wind or fire, nor water nor any form.

सतिगुरू है बोहिथा विरलै किनै वीचारिआ।। करि किरपा पारि उतारिआ।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (आसा की वार म० 1, पृ० 470)

The Master is the boatman; rare are the men who understand Him. When He is kind, He takes us across the Ocean of this World.

- He is One with *Naam*. He is the Ocean of *Naam* and Distributes *Naam* Liberally.

नामि रता सतिगुरू है कलिजुग बोहिथु होइ।।
गुरमुखि होवै सु पारि पवै जिना अंदरि सचा सोइ।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (बिहागड़ा की वार म० 3, पृ० 552)

The Perfect Master is attuned to Naam. He is the boatman in the Iron Age. He, who obeys the Master, crosses the sea and gets attuned to Truth.

सतिगुरु सागरु गुण नाम का मै तिसु देखण का चाउ।।
हउ तिसु बिन घडी न जीवऊ बिन देखे मरि जाउ।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (सूही म० 4, पृ० 759)

The Master is the Ocean of Naam; I long to see Him. I cannot live without Him even for a moment; I will die if I do not see Him.

सतिगुरु दाता हरि नाम का प्रभु आपि मिलावै सोइ।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (सिरीराग म० 4, पृ० 39)

The Master gives Naam of the Lord. He unites us with the Lord.

- He gives the Disciple the Gift of Divine Life and Directs him to Take to Devotion.

जनम मरण दुहहू महि नाही जन परउपकारी आए।।
जीअ दानु दे भगती लाइनि हरि सिउ लैनि मिलाए।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (सूही म० 5, पृ० 749)

The Masters are above birth and death; they come to the world to do good to others. They bless us with Divine Life and Devotion, and Unite us with the Lord.

- He has Eternal Love for the Disciple.

He looks after the disciple with care. He cares for him like a mother. He helps him both here and hereafter.

जिउ जननी सुतु जणि पालती राखै नदरी मझारि।।
अंतरि बाहरि मुखि दे गिरासु खिनु खिनु पोचारि।।
तिउ सतिगुरु गुरसिख राखता हरि प्रीति पिआरि।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (गउड़ी बैरागनि म० 4, पृ० 168)

When a mother looks after her son, she keeps him always in her vision; she feeds him constantly, and caresses him every moment.

So does the Master treat the disciple; He keeps him absorbed in the Love of the Lord.

माता प्रीति करे पुतु खाइ।। मीने प्रीति भई जलि नाइ।।
सतिगुर प्रीति गुरसिख मुखि पाइ।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (गउड़ी गुआरेरी म० 4, पृ० 164)

The mother is happy when the son feeds himself; the fish is happy when it swims in the water; the Master is happy when the disciple heeds His words.

सतिगुरु सिख का हलतु पलतु सवारै।।
नानक सतिगुरु सिख कउ जीअ नालि समारै।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (गउड़ी सुखमनी म० 5, पृ० 286)

The Master helps the disciple; He redeems him here and hereafter. The Master loves the disciple, and protects him with His attention.

- He Comes at the Time of the Disciple's Death and Takes Charge of a Disciple, who Practices According to the Master's Directions.

सचा सतिगुरु सेवि सचु सम्हालिआ।।
अंति खलोआ आइ जि सतिगुर अगै घालिआ।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (मलार की वार म० 5, पृ० 1284)

Serve a True Master; for He gives protection. He comes at the time of death, and takes one along with Him.

How to find a *Guru*?

A True *Guru* is found only through the Grace of the Lord. How can a blind man catch a man with sight, unless the latter helps him to do so? Whenever the Lord is kind to anyone, He creates circumstances for him to meet a Perfect Master. One can do nothing except pray to Him, sincerely with love.

नानक करमु होवै जपीऐ करि गुरु पीरु।। सचि समावै एहु सरीरु।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (मलार म० 1, पृ० 1257)

When He is kind, one meets a Master. One remembers Him, and becomes One with Him.

नदरि करहि जे आपणी ता नदरी सतिगुरु पाइआ।।
एहु जीउ बहुते जनम भरंमिआ ता सतिगुरि सबदु सुणाइआ।।
-- आदि ग्रन्थ (आसा की वार म० 1, पृ० 465)

Only if the Merciful Lord shows His Mercy, the True Guru is found. The soul wonders through countless Incarnations, until the True Guru instructs it in Shabd.

A master is found only by great good fortune.

जिन कउ पूरबि लिखिआ से आइ मिले गुर पासि।।
-- आदि ग्रन्थ (सिरीराग म० 4, पृ० 82)

Those who are pre-ordained by Destiny, come to the Guru and meet Him.

Benefit of Having a *Guru.*

The *Guru*s clearly describe the various benefits of having a Master:

Egotism, pride and ignorance are destroyed. Thirst and hunger go away. Sufferings and doubts are removed. Uncertainty disappears. One is saved from the five thieves, namely: lust, anger, greed, attachment and egotism, and the fire of *Maya*. One becomes wise and gains knowledge of the Three Worlds and of his own self. One becomes happy, pure-minded and cheerful. The mind, which is engrossed in attachment and *Maya*, awakens. Desires are satiated. One obtains occult and spiritual powers, conviction and faith. One becomes happy and full of peace. One is always joyful, and the Lord dwells in one's heart. One is steeped in devotion, attains self-realisation and is dyed in *Naam* and *Shabd*. One is freed from the cycle of birth and death. One is honoured in the Lord's Court both here and hereafter. The Lord of Death is subdued, and one crosses the ocean of the universe and gains release. One treads the path that leads away from this world of delusion. The lotus of the heart blossoms, and one attains the stage of dying while alive. One ascends beyond *Trikuti* त्रिकुटी and attains the condition of *Sahaj Yoga* सहज योग (preparedness for the state of oneness with God), *Sunn Sa-*

madhi सुन्न समाधि (the trance of the void), *Sahaj Gati* सहज गति (the condition of equipoise beyond the influence of *Maya*), the eternal region and ultimately the Pristine Home. One is honoured in the presence of the Lord and is united with the Lord.

Triple Forms of the *Guru.*

There are three forms of the *Guru*:

1. *Deha-Guru* देह–गुरु: *Guru* in human body, who functions as a teacher of Spirituality, and attends to the needs of the disciple at the human level.

2. *Guru-Dev* गुरु–देव: the Radiant Form of the *Guru*, which appears once the disciple has succeeded in collecting all his attention currents at the Third or Single Eye, with whom the disciple can converse as well, who becomes the disciple's companion in the inner spiritual regions, and,

3. *Sat-Guru* सत्गुरु: the *Guru* in the form of Truth at *Sat Lok*, into which the disciple merges, achieving 'self-realisation'.

Guru-Dev – The Radiant Form of the *Guru.*

The word '*dev*' comes from the root '*div* दिव्', which means light. By *Guru Dev* is meant the Radiant form of the Master. Theosophists also say that in the Subtle and Causal planes, the form of the Master is very bright and is visible for many miles. Gosain Tulsidas says that the nails of the Feet of the Master shine like diamonds and by meditating on them, divine sight is developed.

श्रीगुर पद नख मनि गन जोती। सुमिरत दिबय दृष्टि हियँ होती।।

-- श्रीरामचरितमानस (1:1:5)

The Nails of the Feet of the Master shine like diamonds; meditation on them gives divine sight. (Ramayana, Baal Kand)

Maulana Rumi says that when the Master dwells in your heart, you begin to see the past and the future.

पीरे कि चू दर दिलत नशीनद, हाले–अज़लो–अबद ब–बीनद।

-- कितबुल-बैअत (पृ० 5)

When the Guru appears in your heart, you know everything from the beginning to the end.

A deep study of the teachings of the *Guru*s shows that by the *Guru*, is meant the manifested incarnation of the Lord, and our need for such an incarnation has been stressed. A Master is really a Godman who is the manifestation of Divine Truth in the world.

नानक गुरू गुरू है सतिगुरु मै सतिगुरु सरनि मिलावैगो।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (कानड़ा म० 4, पृ० 1310)

O Nanak, the Guru is the Lord; the Perfect Master unites the devotee with the Lord.

The term *Guru-Dev* is also used to refer to the Inner Light-Form of the *Satguru*. This form is free and beyond the bondage of body and mind. It can be seen with the sight faculty of the soul only. When it appears, all doubts are removed, and the disciple's service bears its true fruit.

नेत्र प्रगासु कीआ गुरदेव।। भरम गए पूरन भई सेव।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (गउड़ी म० 5, पृ० 200)

My eyes were opened by the Master, and all my doubts were removed. My aspirations were fulfilled.

Guru Arjan says that this blissful image of the Master appears in the forehead.

सफल मूरति गुर मेरै माथै।। जत कत पेखत तत तत साथै।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (देवगंधारी म० 5, पृ० 535)

The blessed image of the Guru appeared in my forehead, and now I see it wherever I go.

This Light-Form remains with the disciple in the eternal regions as well as in the regions of *Brahm*, and unites him with *Sat Purush*. There is no difference between the *Deha Guru* देह–गुरु (with the body), *Guru Dev* गुरु–देव (with the radiant form), *Satguru* सत्गुरु (in Truth form), and the Lord सत्पुरुष. These are merely the names of different forms of the same merciful current of the Lord.

Owing to the law of "like attracts like", when the Lord appears in human form to redeem souls, he is called the *Deha Guru*. His real form, which has existed from the beginning and throughout many ages and is very bright, is called *Guru Dev*. This form is very blessed. *Satguru* means the Perfect Master. This term is used to mean the True Being, *Sat Purush* who is manifest in the *Satguru*. The *Guru*s say that beyond *Guru Dev*, there is the real form which is *Satguru* and *Hari* (the Lord), and that it is invisible and imperceptible.

गुरुदेव सतिगुरु पारब्रहमु परमेसरु गुरदेव नानक हरि नमसकरा।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (गउड़ी म० 5, पृ० 262)

O Nanak, I bow to Guru-Dev, Satguru, Paar Brahm, Parameshwar and Hari.

सफल मूरति गुरदेउ सुआमी सरब कला भरपूरे।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (बिलावल म० 5, पृ० 802)

The Guru is our Light and our Lord; His very sight is beneficial, for He is the perfection of all Virtues.

महिमा कही न जाइ गुर समरथ देव।।

गुर पारब्रहम परमेसुर अपरंपर अलख अभेव।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (गूजरी की वार म० 5, पृ० 522)

He is beyond all praise; He is the all-powerful Master. The Master is Paar Brahm Parameshwar. He is Limitless, Unseeable and Imperceptible.

गुरु देवा गुरु अलख अभेवा तृभवण सोझी गुर की सेवा।।

आपे दाति करी गुरि दातै पाइआ अलख अभेवा।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (भैरों म० 1, पृ० 1125)

Guru-Dev is Unseeable and Imperceptible; all the Three Worlds become known through His service. It was a gift of His own bounty that I could find the Unimaginable and Imperceptible.

In the human form, He is called a *Guru* (a Master, Authoritative to teach). In his Light-Form, He accompanies us to the subtle, causal and spiritual regions and merges into the form of *Satguru* or *Sat-Purush* and becomes indistinguishable from Him. The *Guru-Dev* is the connecting link between the Guru and *Satguru*. When the soul gathers in one place and

crosses the stars, the sun and the moon, it finds the Light-Form of the *Guru* manifested. This form is like the bodily form of the Master, but it is extremely beautiful, radiant and alluring. When hinting at this, Maulana Rumi says that if you wish to see this form, you should travel towards your Pristine Home, the region that was visited by Hazrat Ibrahim, Abraham. You should pass through the big star, and by your determined efforts transcend the sun and the moon. You will then be able to place your forehead at His Door.

रौ बसूए असले–ख़ुद हमचूँ ख़लील, ब–गुज़र अज़ इस्तारा ओ चर्ख़े–नबील।
पाय हिम्मत बर खुर ओ बर माह निह, सर बर आँ ईवानओ आँ दरगाह निह।

-- मसनवी मौलाना रूमी (दफ़्तर 6, पृ० 476)

Like Khalil, go towards the Reality; cross the star, the skies and the blue beyond; put your foot on the sun and the moon, and then place your head at the Door of His Court.

Guru Nanak also hints at this spiritual path:

पूरब हो पछम को आवै।। रवि ससि दोहां इकत्र मिलावै।।

-- रतन माला (पृ० 767)

From the east, you should turn to the west, and should join together the sun and the moon.

पृथमे पूरब कउ गउन करै।। दुतीआ दखण कउ दिस धरै।।
पच्छम ते जो चडै सुमेर।। आवै परदखणा कै फेर।।
पुरीआ सात ऊपरि कउलासणि।। तिथै पारब्रहम का आसण।।
जिन्ही हीरै रतने माल परोई।। नानक कहै उदासी सोई।।

-- रतन माला (पृ० 767)

First go to the east; then go to the south. Then climb the mountain from the west after a full round; beyond the seventh region is the Lotus Throne, which is the seat of Paar Brahm, resplendent with a wealth of infinite Lights. O Nanak, that is the Land of Perfect Detachment.

Gather the soul together in the back of the eyes and cross the sun and the moon. Then rise up, walk round the seventh *Puri* (*Sahans-dal-kanwal*), and pass by *Brahm* and reach *Paar Brahm*, where there is the Jewel of *Naam*. He, who reaches there is truly detached. The Light-Form of the Master is blissful. Guru Nanak has said,

आनन्द रूपु अनूपु सरूपा गुरि पूरै देखाइआ।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (मारू म० 1, पृ० 1041)

The Wonderful Form is blissful; it is shown by the Perfect Master.

On seeing that form the disciple cries out: "*Wah Guru* वाहगुरु!" (Glorious Master) "*Wah Guru*!" (Wonderful Master).

This form remains with the soul in all the regions and universes. It takes on the form of S*habd* in the region of *Brahm*. It takes the soul to the Ultimate Home or *Sach Khand* (True Region). When this form appears within, all doubts are destroyed, the service of the devotee is approved and half of the task of the disciple is then accomplished. Thenceforth, the devotee has to do nothing. The Light-Form is responsible for taking the soul to the Ultimate Home. The *Sant*s praise this form and the bliss of contemplating on it.

चरन कमल गुरुदेव पिआरे।। पूजहि संत हरि प्रीति पिआरे।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (आसा म० 5, पृ० 394)

The Lotus Feet of the Guru Dev are dear; the Sants worship them with Love.

संतन कै मनि महा अनंदु।। संत जपहि गुरदेउ भगवंतु।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (गोंड म० 5, पृ० 869)

Supreme bliss fills the minds of the Sants. The Sants meditate on the Divine Guru, the Lord.

Khwaja Muin-ud-din Chishti describes the Light Form of the Master as follows:

ज़ शरमे–रूए माहत दर अर्क़ ग़के़–आफ़्ताब,
व अज़ फ़ुरोगे़–माहे–रुख़सारे–तू मह अन्दर नक़ाब।
आफ़्ताब अज़ ख़ाके–राहत याफ़्त चश्मत लाजरम,
दर फ़ज़ाए आसमां ज़द खैमा–ए–ज़री तनाब।
गर ज़ अनवारे–रुख़त यक शुअला ताबद बर फ़लक,
अज़ हया मस्तूर गरदद आफ़्ताब अन्दर नक़ाब।
नूरे–हक़ अस्त आं मुजस्सम गश्ता दर ज़ाते–नबी,
हम चू नूरे–माह कज़ ख़ुर्शीद करदस्त इक्तिसाब।

-- दीवाने-ग़रीब नवाज़ (पृ० 25)

O Master, on seeing Your moon-like face, the sun is steeped in the water of shame, and on seeing the effulgent rays of Your

cheek, the moon has hidden its face. On getting the Dust of Your Path, the sun has become bright and has built his golden throne in the skies. If even one ray of Your bright face were to shine in the skies, the sun would hide itself with shame. In the person of the prophet, this sun or light of truth is manifest, just as the moon gets its light from the sun.

Maulana Rumi also hints at the Master's Radiant Form,

चि दानी तू कि दर बातिन चि शाहे हमनशीं दारम,
रुख़े–ज़रीने–मन बनिगर किह् पाये आहनीं दारम।

-- दीवाने-शम्स तब्रेज़ (पृ० 232)

You do not know the Emperor sitting in my heart. Look inside, and do not be misled by my outer form. You do not know my Companion; you do not know the King inside me. Look at my golden face; look not at my iron feet.

St. John described the Light-Form thus in the Bible:

I was in the spirit on the Lord's day, and heard behind me a great voice, as of a trumpet. (Revelations 1:10)

And I turned to see the voice that spoke with me. And being turned, I saw seven golden candlesticks: and the midst of seven golden candlesticks one like to the Son of Man, clothed with a garment down to the feet, and girt about the paps with a golden girdle. And his head and his hairs were white, as white wool, and as snow, and his eyes were a flame of fire. And his feet like unto fine brass, as in a burning furnace. And his voice as the sound of many waters. (Revelations 1:12-15)

After these things I looked, and behold a door was opened in heaven and the first voice which I heard, as it were, of a trumpet speaking with me, said, 'come up hither, and I will show thee the things which must be done hereafter.' (Revelations 4:1)

There is a hint about this in the 'Saar Bachan', where it is stated that the *Guru* showed His wonderful form which cannot be described.

गुरु मूरत अजब दिखाई। शोभा कुछ कही न जाई।।

-- सार-बचन छंद बंद (19:7;12, पृ० 146)

The Guru appeared in a wonderful form; It cannot be described.

A pure heart is needed to see this form. It can be seen by pure eyes only. It cannot be manifest to every eye.

रुएश बचश्मे पाक तवां दीद चूं हलाल,
हर दीदा जाइ जल्वाए आं माह पारा नेस्त।

-- ख़्वाजा हाफ़िज़

See with the Inner Eye; His face is like the moon. Not every eye can see the glory of that moon.

This form of the Master is everlasting, eternal and ever-existent. This has been so throughout the ages. It leads the seeker to merge in *Sat-Purush*.

धन्नु गुपाल धन्नु गुरदेव।। धन्नु अनादि भूखे कवलु टहकेव।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (गोंड भगत कबीर, पृ० 873)

Great is the Lord; great is the Guru-Dev; great is the Eternal Being, who feeds the Hungry Lotus. (Kabir)

गुरदेव तीरथु अंमृत सरोवरु गुर गिआन मजनु अपरंपरा।।
गुरदेव करता सभि पाप हरता गुरदेव पतित पवित करा।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (गउड़ी म० 5, पृ० 250)

The Divine Guru is the sacred shrine of pilgrimage, and the pool of Divine Ambrosia; bathing in the Guru's wisdom, one experiences the Infinite. The Divine Guru is the Creator, and the Destroyer of all sins, the Divine Guru is the Purifier of sinners.

Guru Arjan also says to the same effect,

आदि गुरए नमह।। जुगादि गुरए नमह।। सतिगुरए नमह।।
स्री गुरदेवए नमह।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (गउड़ी सुखमनी म० 5, पृ० 262)

I bow to the Eternal Guru. I bow to the ever-existent Guru. I bow to the Satguru. I bow to the Guru-Dev.

Guru-Dev is the highest of all and is all-powerful. All happiness is gained by serving Him. By His Grace, egotism is destroyed and one gains release.

सभ ते वड समरथ गुरदेव।। सभि सुख पाई तिस की सेव।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (भैरों म० 5, पृ० 1152)

The Divine Guru is All-powerful and the Greatest of all. Serving Him, I obtain all happiness.

तुम्हरी कृपा से छूटीऐ बिनसै अहंमेव।। सरब कला समरथ प्रभ पूरे गुरदेव।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (बिलावल म० 5, पृ० 811)

By Your Grace, one is emanicipated, and egotism is dispelled. The Guru-Dev is omnipresent, possessing all powers. He is obtained through the Perfect Guru.

Guru-Dev is true. His service is also true. All else is false.

सति सति सति सति सति गुरदेव।। झूठु झूठु झूठु झूठु आन सभ सेव।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (नामदेव भैरों म० 5, पृ० 1166)

True, True, True, True is the Divine Guru. False, false, false, false is all service other than His.

Guru Arjan has sung the praises of the *Guru-Dev* in a beautiful manner. He says,

गुरुदेव माता गुरदेव पिता गुरदेव सुआमी परमेसुरा।।
गुरदेव सखा अगिआन भंजनु गुरदेव बंधिप सहोदरा।।
गुरदेव दाता हरि नामु उपदेसै गुरदेव मंतु निरोधरा।।
गुरदेव साँति सति बुधि मूरति गुरदेव पारस परस परा।।
गुरदेव तीरथु अंमृत सरोवरु गुर गिआन मजनु अपरंपरा।।
गुरदेव करता सभि पाप हरता गुरदेव पतित पवित करा।
गुरदेव आदि जुगादि जुगु जुगु गुरदेव मंतु हरि जपि उधरा।।
गुरदेव संगति प्रभ मेलि करि किरपा हम मूड़ पापी जितु लगि तरा।।
गुरदेव सतिगुरु पारब्रहमु परमेसरु गुरदेव नानक हरि नमसकरा।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (गउड़ी बावन आखरी म० 5, पृ० 250)

Guru-Dev is mother; Guru-Dev is father; Guru-Dev is the Lord and Parameshwar.

The Guru-Dev gives happiness and is a true friend who never deserts us.

He banishes ignorance. He gives the gift of Naam.

He is the manifest image of Peace and of True Intelligence. He is the Philosopher's Stone.

The Guru-Dev destroys all sins and is the Redeemer of sinners. Holy is the spot where He sits. It is the True Fountain of Divine Knowledge and Immortality. One becomes pure by bathing in It.

The Guru-Dev is from the beginning, and has been through the Ages. One is redeemed by remembering the Mantra of the Guru-Dev; His Mantra is the Lord's Mantra.

O Lord! Have mercy and lead us to a Guru-Dev. Take us sinners and fools, across.

The Guru is the Satguru and Paar Brahm Parmeshwar. Nanak bows before the Guru-Dev.

The *Guru*s mention various benefits that result from realising the *Guru-Dev*:

Lust, anger, greed, attachment and pride are gotten rid of, and millions of sins and sufferings are banished. It removes all defects and raises the soul from a lower to a higher level. It extinguishes the fire of *Maya* in which all are burning. All desires are fulfilled, and actions prove fruitful. One is honoured in the world. It redeems souls in the Iron Age, and the foolish and ignorant souls take to devotion for the Lord. They get happiness, peace and equipoise. One becomes emancipated, and redeems one's family also.

The *Guru-Dev* can be realised only through the mercy of the Lord by a great good fortune.

Poora Guru - The Perfect Master.

In order to obtain the full benefit of Spirituality, *Sant*s and *Mahatma*s have, in their hymns, emphasized the need of a Master. But the Guru should be a Perfect Master. It is only a Perfect Master, who can make us perfect. All the *Mahatma*s have, therefore, praised a *Poora Guru* or *Murshid-e-Kami*l (Perfect Master). There are stages of spiritual evolution. Unless you find a Perfect Master, your spiritual evolution will not be complete. If one desires to become a Master of Arts, one cannot do so by learning from a fifth standard or a tenth standard student or a graduate teacher, for they can take one only up to the stages they themselves have attained. In order to pass the Master of Arts (M.A.) examination we need at least an M.A. teacher. In the schools, we have different teachers for different classes. A student who passes the. M.A. examination respects all teachers from the very first class onwards. Similarly, there are stages in Spirituality, such as that of a *Sadhu* or *Sant* or Perfect Master.

In order to get the full benefit of Spirituality, we need a teacher who has attained the stage of a *Sant*. A *Sadhu*, who is free from the bondage of body and mind and has transcend-

ed the three *Guna*s can also help; but a *Guru* of this type places before the disciple the ideal of a *Satguru*.

A person below this stage is not so helpful. A *Guru* can only teach up to the stage, he himself has reached. He takes the disciple there, and not beyond it. It is folly to expect benefit from an imperfect *Guru*. He cannot help you to find release. Guru Nanak Sahib says,

केते गुर चेले फुनि हूआ।। काचे गुर ते मुकति न हूआ।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (रामकली म० 1, पृ० 932)

Disciples are many; so are Gurus; no release can be found through an imperfect master.

A Perfect Master may not have any university degrees, but His company gives something better than formal scholarship, namely, spiritual enlightenment. The Perfect *Guru* does not reveal all His competence on the first day. As the ability of the disciple increases, the *Guru* also reveals more and more. At first, He appears merely as an elderly person, but gradually He reveals Himself as a Perfect *Guru*. He does not stop there. He shows the disciple that He is merged in the Lord, and that there is no difference between Him and the Lord.

- Recognising a *Poora Guru.*

It is not easy to recognise a Perfect Master. We can do so to a certain extent by the signs on His body, His way of life, and the Spirituality gained from Him. Some facts about these points are briefly given below:

He is always kind and treats all alike. He is free from prejudice and enmity. He is unaffected by praise or slander.

सतिगुरु सदा दइआलु है भाई विणु भागा किआ पाईऐ।।
एक नदरि करि वेखै सभ ऊपरि जेहा भाउ तेहा फलु पाईऐ।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (सोरठ म० 3, पृ० 602)

The Master is always merciful; we reap the harvest of our karmas, but His gracious look alleviates pain. He reveals Himself according to the measure of our faith.

वाहु वाहु सतिगुरु सति पुरखु है जिस नो समतु सभ कोइ।।...
वाहु वाहु सतिगुरु निरवैरु है जिसु निंदा उसतति तुलि होइ।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (सलोक वारां ते वधीक म० 4, पृ० 1421)

Great indeed is the Satguru; He is the True Being. Great indeed is the Satguru; He is without enmity. Praise and slander are the same to Him.

- *Poora Guru's* Way of Life.

The Master's way of life is of a particular kind, and it distinguishes Him from others.

The Master is bountiful. He is never a beggar. He does not hanker after anything. He earns His own living. He is a burden on no one. He maintains Himself, and helps the helpless and the suffering.

गुरु पीरु सदाए मंगण जाइ।। ता कै मूलि न लगीऐ पाइ।।
घालि खाइ किछु हथहु देइ।। नानक राहु पछाणहि सेइ।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (सारंग की वार म० 1, पृ० 1245)

He is no Master, who begs from door to door. Do not bow to such a one. He, who labours and gives in charity, O Nanak, he is on the right path.

He charges no fees and does not accept any donations for His teachings. He imparts them free of charge. His teachings are free, like the other bounties of nature such as air, water, sunlight and so forth.

His ornaments are prayer and humility. Despite the fact that He is all-powerful, He does not boast that He can do anything out of the ordinary. He always says that it is the Lord who does something, or that it is being done by His *Satguru*. Truly, a fruit-laden branch bends humbly. He who considers himself humble is truly great.

आपस कउ जो जाणै नीचा।। सोऊ गनीऐ सभ से ऊचा।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (गउड़ी सुखमनी म० 5, पृ० 266)

One who sees himself as lowly, shall be accounted as the highest of all.

He is not opposed to anybody and does not complain about the conduct of anyone. Even if someone bears Him ill-

will, He forgives him. He does not criticize anybody, and He does not slander anyone. He loves everybody, including His enemies. He believes and lives up to the precept:

Love thy enemies.

He is the radiant sun of purity, universal wisdom, truth and Spirituality. He is spiritual, and seekers after Spirituality gather round Him like moths and make their lives fruitful by obtaining spiritual benefit.

He does not dress in any particular manner and does not torture His body for controlling the mind. His method is quite different. It is easy and natural.

He does not perform miracles, like a juggler to please His audience. Although He is all-powerful, He keeps His powers hidden. But He does sometimes use them, if He is so disposed. His disciples are always benefitted by His Grace.

- The Structure of *Poora Guru's* Body.

Certain physical characteristics are said to be possessed by a Perfect Guru. He has no physical defects. He walks like a *chakor* (moon-bird). His eyes are like those of a lion. He has a broad forehead, a lotus on the sole of His foot and a mole on His face. Hafiz Sahib says,

अगर आं तुर्के–शीराज़ी बदस्त आरद दिले–मा रा,
बख़ाले–हिन्दुवश बख़्शम समरकंदो–बुख़ारा रा।

-- दीवाने-हाफ़िज़ ;पृ० 30)

If that Beloved of Shiraz possesses my heart, I will sacrifice Samarkand and Bukhara to His dark mole.

The Character of a *Poora Guru* and the Influence of His Company.

By sitting near a Perfect Master and contemplating on Him, the mind is inclined to get under control and is stilled to some extent.

जिन डिठिआ मन रहसीऐ किउ पाईऐ तिन्ह संगु जीउ।।
संत सजन मन मित्र से लाइनि प्रभ सिउ रंगु जीउ।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (सूही म० 5, पृ० 760)

By seeing Him, the mind becomes happy; but how are we to see Him? The Sants are our friends, helpful and true; they dye us in His colour and help us live in His presence.

Rays of purity constantly radiate from Him. He is full of wonderful Light and kindness. He has an indescribable influence on others. He has magnetic attraction. By His words, which are full of mystical meaning, He pulls the soul upwards. He produces an experience of bliss, which defies description.

गर कशायद ऊ सरे अंबाने राज़, जाँ ब सूए अर्श साज़द तर्कों ताज़।

-- मौलाना रूमी

If He were to give out the secrets of His mysteries; the souls would take flight towards the sky.

One finds a strange radiance and attraction in His eyes and in His forehead when one gazes at them, even for a moment. He feels a pull, and his attention gathers together and seems to ascend to the higher subtle regions from the gross regions. His consciousness expands and is elevated.

There is peace and evenness within a Perfect Master. As a result of being in His company, a current of bliss runs through us. We feel happy on meeting Him. All our doubts are removed and we feel certain that our ultimate destination will be attained.

जिसु मिलिऐ मनि होइ अनन्दु सो सतिगुरु कहीऐ।।
मन की दुबिधा बिनसि जाइ हरि परम पदु लहीऐ।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (गउड़ी बैरागनि म० 4, पृ० 168)

Such a one is the Satguru, on seeing Him one feels happy; that the doubts of the mind are banished, and the Abode of the Lord is attained.

He is full of the Elixir of Life. His face is bright and radiant. His voice is attractive and the light in His eyes is both alluring and piercing. Powerful currents of life-energy emanate from a *Sant* and surcharge the surrounding atmosphere. His words have a strange influence. They penetrate the hearts of the listeners. The mere presence of a *Sant* awakens souls and redeems them.

A Perfect Master can, with a single glance, find out one's inner condition. He then instructs us according to our condition. When anyone visits Him, He can see the visitor's inner condition, as if that person were encased in transparent glass, but He keeps it a secret. Bees rush to flowers for their fragrance and honey; similarly, the seekers go to the Perfect Master to partake of His wealth of Spirituality and righteousness. No one returns empty handed from the bountiful Master. They bring back with them the seed of *Naam* which, sooner or later, fructifies and gives release to the soul. When one begins to visit a Perfect Master, his good days begin.

अब मोहि राम जसो मनि गाइओ।।
भइए प्रगासु सदा सुखु मन महि सतिगुरु पूरा पाइओ।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (धनासरी म० 5, पृ० 671)

I now sing the prasies of the Lord in my mind. My mind has been enlightened, and it is always at peace, for I have found the Perfect True Guru.

The *Sant-Satguru* is the True Son of the Lord. To Him all religions, castes, faiths and sects are alike. He sees the same Lord in all living beings.

पंच तत का पूतला गैबी खंले मांहि।।

-- जनम साखी, गुरु नानक, भाई बाला (मक्के की साखी)

The Lord Himself acts in this body of five elements (the body of the Sant). (Janam Sakhi Guru Nanak – Journey to Mecca)

Without partiality to any religion or caste, He imparts the same message to all the world. To Him, all are the children of God, and He looks upon them with the same eye.

सतिगुरु पुरखु दइआलु है जिस नो समतु सभु कोइ।।
एक दृसटि करि देखदा मन भावनी ते सिधि होइ।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (गउड़ी की वार म० 4, पृ० 300)

The Satguru is merciful, and all are equal to Him. He looks upon all with the same eye, and he who loves Him, prospers.

He clasps all to His bosom.

नानक सतिगुरु ऐसा जाणीए जो सभसै लए मिलाइ जीउ।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (सिरीराग म० 1, पृ० 72)

O Nanak, know Him as the True Guru, who Unites all with the Lord.

He does not ask anyone to give up his religion and adopt a new one. He is concerned only with the soul. He does not mind what religion he belongs to. But it is necessary that you should have a desire for spiritual progress.

There is no question of religion or caste, so far as He is concerned.

हिलि मिलि खेलौं सबद से, अंतर रही न रेख।
समझे का मत एक है, क्या पंडत क्या सेख।।

-- कबीर साखी संग्रह भाग-1 (परिचय का अंग 11, पृ० 108)

I rejoice in Shabd, which knows no distinction. It is the same for all, whether a Brahmin or a Sheikh.

The Perfect Master fearlessly preaches the path of Spirituality, which is free from the limitations of scriptures and formalities, and is present inside everyone. He is a true Haji, one who has made the pilgrimage to Mecca; one who has seen God, who has made the upward journey to the Court of the Lord. You will derive spiritual benefit from a Perfect *Guru*, wherever you meet Him.

Maulana Rumi says,

मर्दे–हज्जी हमरही हाजी तलब, ख़्वाह हिन्दू ख़्वाह तुर्क ओ या अरब।
मनिगर अंदर नक़्श ओ अंदर रंगे–ऊ, बनिगर अंदर अज़्म ओ दर आहंगे–ऊ।

-- मसनवी मौलाना रूमी (दफ़्तर 1, पृ० 304)

If you wish to go on a Pilgrimage, take with you someone who has experience of it, whether he be a Hindu, an Arab or a Turk. Do not look at his features or colour; look at his ideal and determination.

Do not be misled by His outer form. Consider only His spiritual attainment. We do not have to enter into any outer relationship with Him. We must take instructions in spiritual science from Him, and practice what He teaches us.

The Perfect Master is an incarnation of the Lord. Just as the Lord communicates His teachings to the *Sant*s, without the agency of speech, similarly, the *Sant*s impart their messages to their disciples by means of internal experiences, and without the use of speech.

शेख़े–फ़अआल अस्त बे आलत चू हक़्क़।
बा मुरीदां दाद बे–गुफ़्ते सबक़।

-- मसनवी मौलाना रूमी (दफ़्तर 2, पृ० 134)

Like God, the Master does not make use of Speech or any Material Instrument. He teaches the disciple without speaking.

The Master is formless like God and above the sphere of senses. He instructs His disciples without uttering a word.

The teachings of the *Sant*s are imparted in an unspoken language, the language of the soul which, one soul conveys to another soul. The soul is a particle of God and His great mystery. It speaks without tongue or throat.

अम्रे–रब्बी अस्त रूहो–सिर्र खुदास्त, ज़िक्रे–बेकामो–बेज़बां ऊरास्त।

-- दीवाने-ग़रीब नवाज़ ;पृ० 90)

The soul is a particle of God, and it is a secret of God. It can speak without a Tongue or Palate.

It can function and act without the aid of any senses.

अखी बाझहु वेखणा विणु कन्ना सुनणा।।
पैरा बाझहु चलणा विणु हथा करणा।।
जीभै बाझहु बोलणा इउ जीवत मरणा।।
नानक हुकमु पछाणि कै तउ खसमै मिलणा।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (माझ की वार म० 2, पृ० 139)

To see without eyes, to hear without ears, to walk without feet, to work without hands, to speak without a tongue – thus, one remains dead, while yet alive. O Nanak, merge with your Lord and Master, recognising the Command of the Lord.

Maulana Rumi also says that in the higher spiritual regions, these feet are not needed for walking, nor do we require a tongue for eating, wings for flying, ears for hearing or eyes for sight.

बे परो बे पा सफ़र मी करदमे, बे लबो–दंदाँ शकर मी ख़रदमे, चश्म बस्ता आलमे मी–दीदमे।

-- मसनवी मौलाना रूमी (दफ़्तर 1, पृ० 228-29)

The soul travels without wings or feet, it eats without lips or teeth; it sees the universe with closed eyes.

With Perfect Masters, it often happens that seekers after truth have no need to put questions during discourses. They get answers to their questions, without asking them.

Whenever the *Sant*s manifest themselves, they preach the practice of *Naam* or the *Surat-Shabd Yoga* (Yoga of the Spirit-Sound Current) and clearly say that the Lord has never been and will never be realised by formal religious practices. He is inside your heart. Your heart is the true temple of God. You must search for Him there. The Lord can be realised only by going within.

हरि मंदरु एहु सरीरु है गिआनि रतनि परगटु होइ।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (प्रभाती म० 3, पृ० 1346)

This body is the Temple of the Lord, in which the Jewel of Spiritual Wisdom is revealed.

The body of man is a wonderful thing. If the Inner Eyes are opened, it is discovered to be the abode of the Lord, the temple of God. It is the true mosque wherein God is to be found.

मस्जिद अस्त ईं दिल जिस्मश साजद अस्त।

The heart is the mosque; the body is the true place of worship. And God created man to His own image. (Bible, Genesis 1:27)

Why should men, who have within them these natural mosques and temples, wander about outside seeking the Lord? This is not proper. Those who search for the Lord outside the body, cannot find Him.

यार दर पहलू चिरा ऐ बेख़बर,। यार दर तू तू चिह् गरदी दर बदर।

-- मसनवी ब्रू-अली शाह क़लन्दर (पृ० 25)

The Friend is by your side; why are you so ignorant? Your Friend is within you; why do you seek Him elsewhere?

दर दिमाग़े तो गुलशनो मजलिस। सैर कुन तेज़ रौ ज़े मुर्शिद पुर्स।

-- मौलाना रूमी

In your head are beautiful gardens, and the company of Great Souls. Make haste and visit them; ask the Secret from the Master. (Maulana Rumi)

विणु काइआ जि होर थै धनु खोजदे से मूड़ बेताले।।

से उझड़ि भरमि भवाईअहि जिउ झाड़ मिरगु भाले।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (गउड़ी की वार म० 4, पृ० 309)

They who search not inside the body are ignorant and foolish. They look for the treasure in wrong places, like the deer, that looks for musk in the bushes.

Out of ignorance, they wander in solitudes and wastes. Whatever is in the macrocosm, is in the microcosm. You must search for Him inside your own self. We are mistaken, when we search for Him in brooks, streams, hills, man-made temples and other places. We will not find Him there. If we know the secret of the path, we will find Him. We cannot, however, go inside without a True Master.

गुर परसादी वेखु तू हरि मंदरु तेरै नालि।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (प्रभाती बिभास म० 3, पृ० 1346)

Know ye by the Grace of the Master, the Temple of the Lord is within you.

The teachings of the Perfect Masters are wholly true and scientific. They are natural and practical. They are not merely the result of imagination and intellect. Whatever they teach, they teach with absolute conviction, for their teachings are not the result of mere reading or learning. They are based on their own personal inner experiences, and these experiences are common to all holy men. Their spiritual experiences tally with the experiences of other holy men. They do not ask people to have blind faith. They have themselves seen the Lord.

नानक का पातिसाहु दिसै जाहरा।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (आसा म० 5, पृ० 397)

Nanak's Emperor is immanent and manifest (to the Sant).

सोइन कटोरी अंमृत भरी।। लै नामे हरि आगै धरी।।
एकु भगतु मेरे हिरदे बसै।। नामे देखि नराइनु हसै।।
दूधु पीआइ भगतु घरि गइआ।। नामे हरि का दरसनु भइआ।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (भैरों भगत नामदेव, पृ० 1163)

Namdev filled the golden cup with milk, and placed it before the Lord. Such devotees dwell in the Lord's heart. The Lord was pleased; He drank the milk and the devotee went home. Namdev then had the vision of the Lord.

They are true *Haji*s (men who have seen God). Shams-i-Tabriz says,

बबायद चश्म सरे माशूक़ दीदन, कलामश रा बगोशे ख़ुद शुनीदन।
निहां अंदर निहां बीहद जमालश, बगोशे हिस फ़हम बकुनद कमालश।

-- शम्स तब्रेज़

We should see the Beloved with our own eyes, and listen to His voice. When one closes the eyes there is darkness. One should see His Light behind it.

You would then understand His glory as a result of your own experience. The Perfect Masters or *Sant*s do not rely on scriptures and books, for the Scriptures merely describe the experiences of holy men. *Sant*s, however, are themselves the Vedas and the scriptures personified. Books owe their origin to them. They are all this and more. The teachings of the *Sant*s are free and true, and all bondage is banished through them. One attains immortal honour and distinction through them.

Guru Nanak has described the signs by which one can recognise the Perfect Master. He says,

घर महि घरु देखाइ देइ सो सतिगुरु पुरखु सुजाणु।।
पंच सबद धुनिकार धुनि तह बाजै सबदु नीसाणु।।
दीप लोअ पाताल तह खंड मंडल हैरानु।।
तार घोर बाजिंत्र तह साचि तखति सुलतानु।।
सुखमन कै घरि रागु सुनि सुंनि मंडलि लिव लाइ।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (मलार की वार म० 1, पृ० 1291)

The real Master is one who shows us our True Home, inside our body. He makes us hear the five Melodies, that are ever resounding within us. All the worlds, the underworlds, the islands and universes are wonderful, as the sweet Melody of Shabd (Divine Sound) is resounding in them. The Melody comes from the Throne of the True Lord.

Aadi Granth advises us to hear that *Shabd* in the *Sukhman* or the Royal Vein, and attune ourselves to the spiritual regions. The Melody is indescribably sweet; on hearing it, all worldly desires die out. When the lotus of the heart turns upwards, it is filled with this Nectar. When you drink this Nectar, your mind will not waver. Prayer will become automatic and constant, and there will be communion with-

out speech with the unspoken Word, which has been since the very beginning. All the seekers, who realise the Five Melodies, are real devotees and return to their Pristine Home. Aadi Granth says that he is a slave of anyone who seeks and realises *Shabd* and reaches his Home.

घर महि घरु देखाइ देइ सो सतिगुरु पुरखु सुजाणु।।
पंच सबद धुनिकार धुनि तह बाजै सबदु नीसाणु।।
दीप लोअ पाताल तह खंड मंडल हैरानु।।
तार घोर बाजिंत्र तह साचि तखति सुलतानु।।
सुखमन कै घरि रागु सुनि सुंनि मंडलि लिव लाइ।।
अकथ कथा बीचारीऐ मनसा मनहि समाइ।।
उलटि कमलु अंमृति भरिआ इहु मनु कतहु न जाइ।।
अजपा जापु न वीसरै आदि जुगादि समाइ।।
सभि सखीआ पंचे मिले गुरमुखि निज घरि वासु।।
सबदु खोजि इहु घरु लहै नानकु ता का दासु।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (मलार की वार म० 1, पृ० 1291)

He is the Wise and True Master, who shows us our home within our body. There rings the Melody of the Five Shabds; there is the beat of the Drum of Shabd. The worlds, underworlds, islands and seas all make one wonder-struck. A deep and subtle Melody plays there, and a King sits on the Throne of Truth. Hear the Music in the Sukhman, in the region of the Void; hear the Un-utterable Music, and the desires in the mind will die out. The Lotus will be upturned and will be filled with Nectar; then the mind ceases to wander, and the Eternal Music never leaves us. It is with us from the beginning through the Ages. All who realise the Five Shabds and go back to their Original Home, have found Shabd which leads them Home. Nanak is the slave of the one who seeks Shabd and finds the Home within.

All holy men say that the True Master is one who can attune the soul to *Shabd* or Divine Harmony.

सबदु बुझाए सतिगुरु पूरा।। सरब कला साचे भरपूरा।।
अफरिओ बेपरवाहु सदा तू ना तिसु तिलु न तमाई हे।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (मारू म० 1, पृ० 1021)

The Perfect Master attunes us to Shabd; He is all-Powerful and all-Pervading. He is above the illusion of Maya, and has not an iota of greed in Him.

A Perfect Master does not make His disciples engage in any external practice. His teachings are: "Go inside and attune yourself to *Shabd*." The sign of meeting a True Master is that the unending Music begins to play within the initiate.

कहु नानक जिसु सतिगुरु पूरा।। वाजे ता कै अनहद तूरा।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (आसा म० 5, पृ० 393)

O Nanak, he who has a Perfect Master, hears the Anahad Shabd (Unending Music).

He who is attuned to *Naam*, is a Perfect Master. In this Iron Age, He is like a ship that can ferry the souls across. A devotee sets sail on board this ship and goes across the ocean of existence. He realises the Truth within himself.

नामि रता सतिगुरू है कलिजुग बोहिथु होइ।।
गुरमुखि होवै सु पारि पवै जिना अंदरि सचा सोइ।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (बिहागड़ा की वार म० 3, पृ० 552)

The Perfect Master is attuned to Naam; He is the Boatman in the Iron Age. He who obeys the Master crosses over; for he gets attuned to Truth.

Whenever *Sant*s and holy men appear, they sometimes create an atmosphere, which is not liked by the worldly-minded people. They do so, so that the slaves of the world and worshippers of mammon, who often gather round them like flies, may leave them, and the real seekers may not suffer. They intentionally provide some cause for criticism, so that only the deserving will come to them.

दरे–दरवेश रा दरबाँ न बायद, बबायद ता सगे–दुनिया न आयद।

Should there be no keeper at the gates of the Master? There should be one, so that worldly dogs may not crowd in. Slander acts as the Master's doorkeeper, so that no undeserving soul may approach them.

In the 'Janam Sakhi (biography) of Guru Nanak', written by Bhai Bala, it is stated that Guru Nanak said,

Many Sants will incarnate in the Iron Age in order to redeem the sinners.

Bhai Ajite then asked,

What would be the signs by which they could be recognised, and would the people be able to find them?

The Guru said,

One sign would be that whenever Sants would incarnate, many impostors, who followed the formalities of religion, would criticize them. A few would follow the Sants, but they, too, would be criticized by the so-called disciples of the so-called Gurus. People would forget the Yoga of the Sound Current and would read the written words and say prayers while kneeling. The Path of the Unending Music would be forgotten. Men would repeat other mantras and would not know about the Path of inner devotion. When the Yoga of the Sound Current would not be practiced, I will appear in the garb of Sants. When the practice of Anahad Shabd (Unending Music) commences, one could know that I was there.

When a *Sant* appears on the earth, there is a flood of Spirituality. The true seekers gather round Him from all sides. All benefit from His teachings – the simple as well as the righteous, for they find a true satisfaction in the teachings. It even happens that some thieves, robbers and sinners also come to the *Sant*s, benefit by their teachings and become holy men. The Masters act like a washer-man and wash away the dirt of our sins. They are living examples of selflessness and sacrifice. They rule the hearts of the people. Spirituality is preached by them on a grand scale. People throng around them by the thousands, and the world is wonderstruck by this demonstration of Spirituality and devotion.

The Perfect Masters or *Sant*s are powerful personalities. They look after their disciples, whether they be near at hand or far away. This naturally creates confidence in the hearts of their disciples. Their hand is no less strong than that of the Lord. Their reach is so great, as to transcend the seven skies. As the disciple's contact with his Master increases, he receives fresh benefits and sees new miracles.

दस्ते–पीर अज़ ग़ायबाँ कोताह नीस्त,
दस्ते–ऊ जुज़ कब्ज़ा–ए–अल्लाह नीस्त।

-- मसनवी मौलाना रूमी (दफ़्तर 1, पृ० 312)

Powerful is His hand; It is no less strong than that of the Lord. His hand has the power of God. You may be sure that His reach is so great, that It transcends the Seven Skies. (Maulana Rumi)

These are some of the signs of a Perfect Master which should be taken into consideration by a seeker.

Besides these, there are innumerable other signs which a seeker recognises after being in His company for some time. Maulana Rumi says there are other signs which are known only to those who are acquainted with them.

बस निशानी हा कि अंदर औलियास्त, ख़ास आँ जाँ बवद कि आश्नास्त।

There are many signs to help one recognise a Sant; but only he who knows them can recognise them.

When one goes inside, one sees the Light-Form of the Master, and this form speaks to the disciple. It replies to his questions and remains with him constantly.

गुरु मेरै संगि सदा है नाले।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (आसा म० 5, पृ० 394)

The Master is constantly with me.

The disciple then knows the Master intimately.

The world is full of the so-called "masters", but most of them hunger for fame and wealth and are not real masters. They should be avoided. A master should be adopted only after a careful and balanced consideration. If one should find the above signs in anyone, it would be an indication that there is some reflection of the genuine truth in Him. Never try, however, to test a Perfect Master. When one meets a Perfect Master, the mind is stilled by His magnetic attraction. There can be no success without His help.

हेच न–कुशद नफ़्स रा जुज़ ज़िल्ले–पीर,
दामने आँ नफ़्स कुश रा सख़्त गीर।
चूँ बगीरी सख़्त आँ तौफ़ोके–हूस्त,
दर तू हर कुव्वत कि आयद जज़्बे–ऊस्त।

-- मसनवी मौलाना रूमी (दफ़्तर 2, पृ० 242)

Except for the Master's Grace, nothing kills the ego. Hold fast to the garment of that great Mind-Subduer. If you hold fast, it will be, because of His Grace; whatever power you get, will be His.

The Perfect Master is a person who is free from cravings and desires. You must surrender to Him all your mind, body and wealth so that He may make you like Him. How this body and mind should be surrendered, is described as follows by Kabir Sahib:

मन दीया तिन सब दिया, मन की लार सरीर।
अब देवे को कछु नहीं, यों कह दास कबीर।।
तन मन दिया तो भल किया, सिर का जासी भार।
कबहूँ कहै कि मैं दिया, घनी सहैगा मार।।
तन मन ता को दीजिए, जाके विषया नाहिं।
आपा सबही डारि कै, राखै साहिब माहिं।।
तन मन दिया तो क्या हुआ, निज मन दिया न जाय।
कहै कबीर ता दास से, कैसे मन पतीयाय।।
तन मन दीया आपना, निज मन ता के संग।
कहै कबीर निरभय भया, सुन सतगुर परसंग।।
निज मन तो नीचा कीया, चरन कंवल की ठौर।
कहै कबीर गुरदेव बिन, नजर न आवै और।।

-- कबीर साखी संग्रह भाग-1 (गुरुदेव का अंग 18-23, पृ० 2-3)

Surrender body and mind to Him, who has no desires; who has given up all consideration for the self, and who attunes you to the Lord.

Surrender of the mind means surrender of all, for the body goes with the mind. What else is left with you to give? Kabir says, Surrender of body and mind is for your good; the burden is then removed from your own head.

Surrender the mind to one, who is without desires. Give up your ego to the Master.

When body and mind are truly surrendered, the desires should also go with them. Kabir says that he is without fear, for his mind is with the Master.

His innermost thoughts are also surrendered at the Lotus Feet. O Kabir, these feet are those of the Master, I see naught else.

A Perfect Master is a wonderful being whose worth is beyond description.

गुर पूरे की अचरज वडिआई नानक सद बलिहारे।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (सोरठ म० 5, पृ० 618)

A Perfect Master is glorious. O Nanak, may I be a sacrifice unto Him.

पूरे गुर की देखु वडाई।। ता की कीमति कहणु न जाई।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (सोरठ म० 5, पृ० 614)

Behold the Glorious Greatness of the Perfect Guru. His Worth cannot be described.

A Perfect Master is a highly realised soul. He has no feeling of duality. One is redeemed on meeting Him.

जिस कउ रिदै विगासु है भाउ दूजा नाही।।

नानक तिसु गुर उधरै हरि गुण गावाही।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (गउड़ी बैरागनि म० 4, पृ० 168)

His mind is enlightened; He has no feeling of duality. O Nanak, meet Him, for He redeems and sings the Praises of the Lord.

He is a helper of the helpless and a pardoner of the sinners.

होइ निमाणी ढहि पवा पूरे सतिगुर पासि।।

निमाणिआ गुरु माणु है गुरु सतिगुरु करै साबासि।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (सिरीराग म० 4, पृ० 41)

Be humble and lie prostrate before the Master; the Master honours the humble, and blesses them.

हुकमु भइआ रहणा नही धुरि फाटे चीरै।।

एहु मनु अवगणि बाधिआ सहु देह सरीरै।।

पूरै गुरि बखसाईअहि सभि गुनह फकीरै।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (मारू म० 1, पृ० 1012)

No one remains here forever; it is so ordained. Time tears up the body. This mind is full of defects, and the body suffers because of them. I am a sinful beggar. But the Perfect Master obtains reprieve for me, and forgives my sins.

When a Perfect Master looks at a soul with a merciful look, the soul is redeemed.

आपु वीचारै सु परखे हीरा।। एक दृसटि तारे गुर पूरा।।

गुरु मानै मन ते मनु धीरा।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (आसा म० 1, पृ० 413)

The devotee reflects on the self, and recognises the diamond. The Perfect Master gives him a single glance, and thereby redeems him. When the disciple accepts the Master, his mind is stilled.

Bhai Nand Lal 'Goya' says that one life-giving look of the Master is sufficient.

यक निगाहे जांफिज़ाइश बस बवद दरकारे मा।।

-- मसनवी मौलाना रूमी (दफ़्तर 1, पृ० 312)

A single life-giving look of the Master is quite sufficient for redeeming the disciple.

Whatever the Perfect Master desires is approved by the Lord and comes to pass in this world.

जो बोले पूरा सतिगुरू सो परमेसरि सुणिआ।।
सोई वरतिआ जगत महि घटि घटि मुखि भणिआ।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (बिलावल की वार म० 3, पृ० 854)

Whatever the Perfect Master prays for, it is heard by the Lord. It pervades everywhere, and is in every heart and on every tongue.

The power of the Master is *Shabd*; It is eternal.

गुरू पूरा पूरी ता की कला।। गुर का सबदु सदा सद अटला।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (प्रभाती म० 5, पृ० 1339)

Perfect is the Master; perfect is His power; His Word is eternal; It lives forever.

How can a *Poora Guru* be found?

The Perfect Master is found only through the Grace of the Lord.

जिस नो कीतो करमु आपि पिआरे तिसु पूरा गुरू मिलाइआ।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (सोरठ म० 5, पृ० 640)

He, to whom the Lord is kind, meets a Perfect Master.

नानक हरि होइ दइआलु तां गुरु पूरा मेलावए।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (सलोक वारां ते वधीक म० 4, पृ० 1421)

O Nanak, when the Lord is merciful, then a Perfect Master meets you.

Many aspire to get a Perfect Master, but only he, who is so destined, meets Him.

सो पाए पूरा सतिगुरू जिसु लिखिआ लिखतु लिलारे।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (गउड़ी की वार म० 4, पृ० 307)

He alone finds a Perfect Master, whose Destiny is so ordained.

How is the ground prepared for meeting Him? When one sincerely aspires to meet the Lord, the Master appears.

अंतरि प्रीति भगति साची होइ।। पूरै गुरि मेलावा होइ।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (भैरों म० 3, पृ० 1129)

He who has sincere Devotion in his heart, meets a Perfect Master.

The Signs of meeting a *Poora Guru.*

There are many signs for ascertaining that one has met a Perfect Master. The most significant of these is that one gets a first hand-experience, a living contact with *Naam*, the Light of God and the Voice of God. The wish of the Master (which, in fact, is the wish of the Lord, since the Master is merged in the Lord and there is no distinction between them) becomes the willing duty of the disciple. He then treads the path of obedience and submission.

तेरा हुकमु अपार है कोई अंतु न पाए।।
जिसु गुरु पूरा भेटसी सो चलै रजाई।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (आसा म० 5, पृ० 396)

Your Law is infinite, and nobody can fully comprehend It; he who meets a Master, treads the path ordained by Him.

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12

ONENESS OF GURU, GURU DEV, SATGURU AND LORD

(*Guru, Gurudev, Satguru aur Malik ki ekata*
गुरु, गुरुदेव, सतगुरु और मालिक की एकता)

It is said in the scriptures that *Akaal Purush* is without form. He sees without eyes, works without hands, walks without feet and hears without ears. He is present everywhere, yet, is not visible.

He is beyond the reach of intellect or imagination, for they function within human limitations. How is one to meditate on Him and to become acquainted with Him? For, in actual fact, one can love only one's fellow human beings.

कुनद हम जिन्स बा हम जिन्स परवाज। कबूतर बा कबूतर बाज़ बा बाज़।।

Birds of a feather flock together, pigeons with pigeons, and falcons with falcons.

Birds love birds, animals love animals, and man loves man. In order to still the mind, we must have something before the eyes as an objective. To fulfil this need of human beings, Rama, Krishna and others came to this world as incarnations of *Kaal*, in the form of human beings, and *Sant*s come as incarnations of *Sat Purush*, also as human beings. In an inspired line, the Persian-Indian mystic, Sarmad says,

अगर आ ख़ुदा अस्त ख़ुद मी आयद।

-- नग़मा-ए-सरमद (रूबाई 75, पृ० 64)

Since He is God, He comes Himself.

This is true. God does reveal Himself to us. We are helpless and have no access to the Lord. He is all powerful. But in spite of His being formless, He reveals His Light in the human body and thus manifests Himself. He appears amongst us in the form of a Perfect *Sant* and becomes

the means of uniting us with the Lord. The *Satguru* is the being through whom the Lord sends His message to us in this world. The *Guru*s have therefore repeatedly praised the *Satguru*, and they say that the Lord is manifested in Him and that if you wish to be united with Him, you must take shelter with the Master. There is no other means of success.

गुरु परमेसरु एको जाणु।। जो तिसु भावै सो परवाणु।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (गोंड म० 5, पृ० 864)

Know ye the Master and the Lord to be one; the Lord accepts one whom the Master loves.

गुरु नाराइणु दयु गुरु गुरु सचा सिरजणहारु।।
गुरि तुठै सभ किछु पाइआ जन नानक सद बलिहार।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (गउड़ी माझ म० 5, पृ० 218)

The Master is sent by the Lord; the Master is the True Sustainer. If the Master is pleased, everything is yours. Nanak would gladly sacrifice himself unto Him a thousand times.

What is the meaning of Oneness?

The oneness of the Master with the Lord means that his essence is merged in the essence of the Lord, and they are One. The Lord is infinite. He pervades everywhere. The Master is the pole, where He is manifest, and the whole world derives spiritual Light from him. The Master, so to say, is the bulb in which the electric light is made to appear. The Lord enlightens the people of the world by this bulb. The Master is not the body. He transcends it. The disciple is also not the body. When he transcends the bondage of the body, he sees the glory of the Master. The *Satguru* is the place where the sun of Reality rises. One of the *Sant*s says,

दर बशर रूपोश कर्द अस्त आफ़्ताब।

-- मसनवी मौलाना रूमी, निकलसन (2964, दफ़्तर 1, पृ० 182)

He has hidden a sun in the human being.

The True Master is hidden in the human body. He radiates the Light of the Lord. This body is not sufficient to manifest His light and beauty. In order to know Him as he really

is, we have to rise above the body. His eyes are the windows of the Lord's Home, and in them shines His Light. We cannot understand it by any worldly example.

The Perfect Master remains intoxicated without wine and satisfied without food.

मर्दे–ख़ुदा मस्त बुवद बे–शराब, मर्दे–ख़ुदा सेर बुवद बे–कबाब।

-- कुल्लियाते-शम्स तब्रेज़ (पृ० 116)

The Man of God remains intoxicated without wine; the Man of God remains satisfied without any meal. (Maulana Rumi)

His eyes remain fixed on the vision of the Lord, and his hand is the hand of the Lord.

चश्मे–ऊ मस्ते–ख़ुदा दस्ते–ऊ दस्ते–ख़ुदा।

-- दीवाने-शम्स तब्रेज़ (पृ० 116)

His eyes are fixed on the vision of God; His hand is the hand of God. (Maulana Rumi)

The Master is not a creature of this world and is not in the bondage of this body. He goes beyond all the lower worlds and regions, the mind and the intellect, and lives and moves in the spiritual regions. And He, in his mercy, gives eyes to thousands of persons to see inner sights and cross these regions.

The living Master is one with the Lord. He is the true manifestation of the Lord in this world. He has been given the duty of working for the salvation of its creatures. He is the manifestation of *Shabd*. He is the source of love. He is the incarnation of bliss and peace. Only man can guide man. This is the law of nature. The Master assumes human form according to this law, so that he may persuade people and unite them with the Lord through his own strength. He can every day, or whenever he likes, enjoy the bliss of the innermost and highest regions of Light and Life. The Sikh Gurus and other holy men have clearly stated that there is no difference between the Master and the Lord. In fact they are one.

अपरंपार पारब्रहमु परमेसरु नानक गुरु मिलिआ सोई जीउ।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (सोरठ म० 1, पृ० 599)

The Lord is Infinite, Transcendent and Omnipotent. O Nanak, He is met in the Form of the Master.

सतिगुरु मेरा सदा सदा ना आवै न जाइ।।
ओहु अबिनासी पुरखु है सभ महि रहिआ समाइ।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (सूही म० 4, पृ० 759)

My Guru is True and Eternal; He does not come and go; He is the Imperishable one. He pervades all.

How can the Master's greatness be described? He is from the beginning, and has been throughout the ages. He is the very Lord.

गुरु की महिमा किआ कहा गुरु बिबेक सत सरु।।
ओहु आदि जुगादी जुगह जुगु पूरा परमेसरु।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (आसा म० 5, पृ० 397)

How can the Guru be praised? He is the pool of Wisdom and Truth; He has existed throughout the Ages, from the beginning. He is the very Lord.

The *Guru*s say:

समुंदु विरोलि सरीरु हम देखिआ इक वसतु अनूप दिखाई।।
गुर गोविंदु गोविंदु गुरू है नानक भेदु न भाई।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (आसा म० 4, पृ० 442)

We churned the sea of the body, and saw a wonderful sight. The Lord is the Guru and the Guru is the Lord. O Nanak, there is no difference or distinction.

The Lord lives in the Master.

गुर महि आपु रखिआ करतारे।। गुरमुखि कोटि असंख उधारे।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (मारू म० 1, पृ० 1024)

The Creator Himself is in the Master; the Lord is manifested in the Master. Myriads of men are redeemed by Him.

बिनु गुर प्रेम न लभई जन वेखहु मनि निरजासि।।
हरि गुर विचि आपु रखिआ हरि मेले गुर साबासि।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (मारू म० 4, पृ० 996)

Without the Master love does not awaken in the heart, try as you may. The Lord has enshrined Himself in the Master, and the Master Unites us with Him. All homage to the Master!

सगल कलेस निंदक भइआ खेदु।। नामे नाराइन नाही भेदु।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (भैरों भगत नामदेव, पृ० 1166)

The slanderers come to grief and suffering; there is no difference between Namdev and the Lord. (Naamdev)

Kabir Sahib says,

अब हम तुम एक भए हहि एकै देखत मनु पतीआही।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (गउड़ी भगत कबीर, पृ० 339)

I and You, my Lord, are now One. My mind is filled with the Joy of Union. (Kabir)

He again says, "*Ram* (Lord) and Kabir are united, and nobody can distinguish between them."

अब तउ जाइ चढे सिंघासनि मिले है सारिंगपानी।।

राम कबीरा एक भए है कोइ न सकै पछानी।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (रामकली भगत कबीर, पृ० 969)

I have ascended to the Lord's throne, and have met the Supreme Music-Maker. Rama and Kabir are now One, no one can distinguish between them. (Kabir)

The Lord and the Master are one.

हरि गुर मूरति एका वरतै नानक हरि गुर भाइआ।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (मारू म० 1, पृ० 1043)

The Lord and the Master are One; O Nanak, the Lord loves the Master.

गुरु परमेसरु एकु है सभ महि रहिआ समाइ।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (सिरीराग म० 5, पृ० 53)

The Master and the Lord are One; He pervades everywhere.

जिउ जल तरंग फेनु जल होई है सेवक ठाकुर भए एका।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (सारंग म० 5, पृ० 1209)

As the waves of water and the foam become water again, so do the Lord and His slave become One.

नानक हरि जन हरि एके होए हरि जपि हरि सेती रलिआ।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (वडहंस म० 4, पृ० 562)

O Nanak, the Lord's humble devotee and the Lord become One; meditating on the Lord, he merges in the Lord.

नानक संत संत हरि एको जपि हरि हरि नामु सोहंदी।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (सिरीराग म० 4, पृ० 79)

O Nanak, the Sant and Hari (the Lord) are One; remember Him, blessed is His Naam.

राम संत महि भेदु किछु नाही एकु जनु कई महि लाख करोरी।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (गउड़ी म० 5, पृ० 208)

There is no distinction between the Sant and the Lord; there is barely one like Him in a billion.

हरि जन प्रभु रलि एको होए हरि जन प्रभु एक समानि जीउ।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (आसा म० 4, पृ० 447)

The Lord and His slave merge and become One; the Lord and His slave are alike.

The Lord and His devotees are One. Let there be no doubt about this. The *Sant* is like the wave, which is nothing but a rise of water and not different from it.

हरि हरि जन दोइ एक है बिब बिचार कछू नाहि।।
जल ते उपज तरंग जिउ ही विखे समाहि।।

-- दसम ग्रन्थ (बचित्र नाटक, दोहरा 60)

The Lord and His Devotees are One; there is no difference between them. The wave rises from the water, then subsides in it. (SriDasam.org p.56)

The drop, when it falls into the ocean, becomes one with the ocean. The Lord is wonderful. The Master is the means of manifesting Him.

पारब्रहमु परमेसरु अनूपु।। सफल मूरति गुरु तिस का रूपु।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (भैरों म० 5, पृ० 1152)

The transcendent Lord is wonderful. The Guru is the embodiment of the Lord, the Image of Fulfillment,

All religious books say that there is no difference between the Master and the Transcendent One.

नानक सोधे सिंमृति बेद।। पारब्रहम गुर नाही भेद।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (भैरों म० 5, पृ० 1142)

O Nanak, I have studied the Smritis and the Vedas; there is no difference between the transcendent One and the Master.

The Lord is *Shabd* (or the Word-made-flesh). He pervades the Master as *Shabd*. He distributes the gift of *Shabd* through the Master. He is the Incarnation of *Shabd*.

गुर महि आपु समोइ सबदु वरताइआ।। सचे ही पतीआइ सचि समाइआ।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (मलार की वार म० 1, पृ० 1279)

The Lord Himself pervades the Guru; He pervades as Shabd. The Master loves the True One, and He merges in the True One.

The Master is One with the Lord, as is *Shabd*.

आपे सतिगुरु आपि सबदु जीउ जुगु जुगु भगत पिआरे।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (गउड़ी म० 3, पृ० 246)

The Lord Himself is the Master and Shabd. He has loved the devotees through the ages.

The Word was made flesh and dwelt amongst us, full of Grace and Truth. (Holy Bible, John 1:14)

There is no difference between the *Guru*, *Satguru* and the Lord.

गुर सतिगुर सुआमी भेदु न जाणहु जितु मिलि हरि भगति सुखाँदी।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (सिरीराग म० 4, पृ० 77)

There is no difference between the Perfect Master and the Lord; Devotion to them is crowned with happiness.

The Master is the True Being, who repeats *Naam* of the Lord, on hearing which, the souls are redeemed.

हरि का संतु सतगुरु सत पुरखा जो बोलै हरि हरि बानी।।

जो जो कहै सुणै सो मुकता हम तिस कै सद कुरबानी।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (धनासरी म० 4, पृ० 667)

The Perfect Master is the True Being; He repeats the Name of the Lord. He who hears what He says is Liberated; may we be a sacrifice unto Him.

The Perfect Master is eternal and everlasting. He is free from birth and death. He is never-changing. He is never destroyed. He is sustained by *Naam* or Power of God.

सतिगुरु मेरा सदा सदा ना आवै न जाइ।।

ओहु अबिनासी पुरखु है सभ महि रहिआ समाइ।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (सूही म० 4, पृ० 759)

The Master is Eternal; He does not come and go. He is the Imperishable One; He pervades all.

सतिगुरु पुरखु अचलु अचला मति जिसु दृडता नामु अधारे।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (सारंग म० 4, पृ० 1199)

The Master is Unchanging; His mind is still. He is sustained by Naam.

The Perfect Master is a manifestation of the Lord. His words are Nectar and make men immortal.

सतिगुरु देउ परतखि हरि मूरति जो अंमृत बचन सुणावै।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (मलार म० 5, पृ० 1264)

The Perfect Master is the image of the Lord, and His words are Nectar.

The Master, being one with the Lord, is the creative cause of the universe. He sustains the entire universe and its living beings.

गुरु करता गुरु करणहारु गुरमुखि सची सोइ।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (सिरीराग म० 5, पृ० 52)

The Master is the Creator; the Master is the Sustainer; His words are true.

गुरु परमेसरु करणैहारु।। सगल सृसटि कउ दे आधारु।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (सूही म० 5, पृ० 741)

The Master is the Lord, the Creator. He is the Sustainer of the entire Universe.

गुरु सुखदाता गुरु करतारु।। जीअ प्राण नानक गुरु आधारु।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (गउड़ी गुआरेरी म० 5, पृ० 187)

The Master is a Fountain of Happiness; the Master is the Creator. He is the life of the souls; Nanak is sustained by the Master.

Tulsidas Ji says,

बंदउँ गुरु पद कंज कृपा सिंधु नररूप हरि।
महामोह तम पुंज जासु बचन रबि कर निकर।।

-- श्रीरामचरितमानस (1:1:5)

I bow at the holy feet of the Master. He is the Ocean of Compassion and Mercy. He is, in reality, the Lord in human form. His words, like the rays of the sun, dispel the thick darkness of attachment.

One day, Lord Christ asked his disciples:

But whom do you say that I am?

Simon Peter answered and said,

Thou art Christ, the son of the living God. And Jesus answering said to him: Blessed art thou, Simon Bar-Jona: because flesh and

blood hath not revealed it to thee, but my Father who is in heaven. And I say to thee: That thou art Peter; and upon this rock I will build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. (St Matthew 16:15-18)

On another occasion he spoke more clearly to them. Philip said to him,

Lord, show us the Father, and it is enough for us.

Jesus said to him,

Have I been so long a time with you; and yet hast thou not known me, Philip? He that hath seen me, hath seen the Father also. How sayest thou, show us the Father? Believest thou not that I am in the Father and the Father is in me? (St John 14:8-10)

Jesus also said,

I and the Father are one. He that seeth me hath seen the Father. This that I tell you I do not say of my own, but the Father abiding in me doth His works. Believe me that I am in the Father and the Father is in me.(Bible, John 14:10)

Guru Arjan, when speaking of his oneness with the Lord, clearly stated:

मंदर मेरे सभ ते ऊचे।। देस मेरे बेअन्त अपूछे।।
राजु हमारा सदा ही निहचलु।। मालु हमारा अखूटु अबेचलु।।
सोभा मेरी सभ जुग अंतरि।। बाज हमारी थान थनंतरि।।
कीरति हमारी घरि घरि होई।। भगति हमारी सभनी लोई।।
पिता हमारे प्रगटे माझ।। पिता पूत रलि कीनी साँझ।।
कहु नानक जउ पिता पतीने।। पिता पूत एकै रंगि लीने।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (भैरों म० 5, पृ० 1141)

My temple is the highest of the high. My region is Endless and Indescribable.

My Kingdom is an Everlasting one. My Wealth is immense and everlasting.

My Glory resounds throughout the ages. My Fame has spread in all spaces and interspaces.

I am praised in every home. Devotion is given to me in all the lands.

My Father, the Lord is manifest within me. The Father and the son have become one.

Says Nanak, when the Father is pleased, He and the son become dyed in the same hue.

Hindu scriptures also say the same thing:

गुरुर्ब्रह्मा गुरुर्विष्णुः गुरुर्देवो महेश्वरः। गुरुरेव परब्रह्मः तस्मै श्रीगुरवे नमः।।

-- स्कन्द पुराण, गुरु गीता (32)

The Master is Brahma; the Master is Vishnu; the Master is Maheshwara; the Master is the transcendent One. I bow to such a Master.

A drop merges into the sea, and becomes the sea. It is so stated in 'Mandakya Upanishad' that,

यथा नद्यः स्यन्दमानाः समुद्रेऽस्तं गच्छन्ति नामरूपे विहाय।
तथा विद्वान् नामरूपाद् विमुक्तः परात्परं पुरुषमुपैति दिव्यम्।।
स यो ह वै तत् परमं ब्रह्म वेद ब्रह्मैव भवति नास्याब्रह्मवित्कुले भवति।
तरति शोकं तरति पाप्मानं गुहाग्रन्थिभ्यो विमुक्तोऽमृतो भवति।।

-- मुण्डकोपनिषद् (3:2:8-9)

As rivers, flowing, disappear in the ocean losing name and form, so the wise man, free from name and form, goes unto the highest of the high the Supreme Divinity.

Whoever knows the supreme Brahman, becomes very Brahman. In his family none ignorant of Brahman is born. The knots of his heart being unloosed, he goes beyond sorrow and sin, and attains immortality.

In this connection, Lord Krishna says in the 'Gita':

अव्यक्तं व्यक्तिमापन्नं मन्यते मामबुद्धयः। परं भावमजानन्तो ममाव्ययमनुत्तमम्।।
नहां प्रकाशः सर्वस्य योगमायासमावृतः।
मूढोऽयं नाभिजानाति लोको मामजमव्ययम्।।

-- श्रीमद्भगवद्गीता (7:24-25)

The undiscerning think that I am the Unmanifest that has come to Manifestation; they do not know my Higher Being, Immutable, Supreme. Veiled by Maya, I am not known to all. This world is deluded and does not recognise me as Unborn and Immutable.

He again says,

अवजानन्ति मां मूढा मानुषीं तनुमाश्रितम्।
परं भावजानन्तो मम भूतमहेश्वरम्।।

-- श्रीमद्भगवद्गीता (9:11)

I pervade all the universe in my Unmanifest form; all beings are Sustained by me, but I do not depend on them. Fools scorn me because I have taken the human form. My Higher Being is not known to them.

The Muslim holy men also say that the Master is, in fact, the Lord. Maulana Rumi says that the hand of the Master is not smaller than that of the Lord. It wields His very same power. His reach is very long and extends beyond the seventh heaven. His hand is connected with the Lord. No one can imagine His grandeur. He is a brilliant sun hidden in the form of a man. Try to know Him as He really is.

दस्ते–पीर अज़ ग़ायबाँ कोताह नीस्त,
दस्ते–ऊ जुज़ क़ब्ज़ा–ए–अल्लाह नीस्त।

-- मसनवी मौलाना रूमी (दफ़्तर 1, पृ० 312)

Powerful is the Master's Hand; it is not less strong than that of the Lord; His Hand is the power of God. One should believe in its Greatness for It extends to the highest heaven.

पस मरा दस्ते–दराज़ आमद यक़ीं, बर गुज़श्त अज़ आस्माने–हफ़्तमीं।

-- मसनवी मौलाना रूमी (दफ़्तर 2, पृ० 187)

In His palm flows the Eternal Current; the Lord is without rival or partner in His grandeur. He has hidden a sun within the human being. Know the Master as He is. (Maulana Rumi)

Maulana Rumi again says,

दर बशर रूपोश कर्द अस्त आफ़्ताब,
फ़हम कुन वल्लाहू आअलम वस्सवाब।

-- मसनवी मौलाना रूमी, निकलसन (2964 दफ़्तर 1, पृ० 182)

The Light of the Lord shines in the Master. We look at His Manifest human form and therefore do not know that He is in fact the Lord Himself. (Maulana Rumi)

नूरे–हक़ ज़ाहिर बुवद अंदर वली, नेक बीं बाशी अगर अहले–दिली।

-- मसनवी मौलाना रूमी (दफ़्तर 1, पृ० 39)

He has assumed the form of a human being, but in reality He is the Lord. The Light of the Lord shines in the Master. You can see this if you master your mind. (Maulana Rumi)

He further says that the Lord has said that He is very vast. He cannot be contained in the hills, dales, lands

and skies and so forth. It is curious, however, that He is contained in the heart of a Master. In other words, the ocean is contained in a pot. If you want to search for Him, look for Him there.

गुफ़्त पैग़म्बर किह् हक़ फ़रमूदा अस्त, मन नगुंजम हेच दर बाला व पस्त।
दर ज़मीनो आसमानो अर्श नीज़, मन नगुंजम ईं यक़ीं दान ऐ अज़ीज़।
दर दिले–मोमन बगुंजम ऐ अजब, गर मरा जूई दरां दिलहा तलब।

-- मसनवी मौलाना रूमी (दफ़्तर 1, पृ० 282)

The Prophet said, 'God has told me, I do not live high nor low. I do not live in land or skies, nor do I live in heavens. Believe me, my dear, I live in the hearts of Sants. If you want me, go and seek in those hearts.' (Maulana Rumi)

सूरतश बर ख़ाक़ ओ जाँ दर ला–मकाँ, ला–मकाने फ़ौक़े–वहमे–सालिकाँ।

-- मसनवी मौलाना रूमी (दफ़्तर 1, पृ० 182)

His body is in this material world, but His soul is in the heavens. He is beyond the ken of matter and mind. (Rumi)

Shams-i-Tabriz says that the Perfect Master is the King of kings. The Lord has closed the doors to His abode and is sitting behind them, but He manifests Himself in human form as a Perfect Master and comes to earth to open the doors.

आँ पादशाहे–आज़म दर बस्ता बूद मुहकम,
पोशीद दल्क़े–आदम यानी किह् बर दर आमद।

-- दीवाने-शम्स तब्रेज़ (पृ० 136)

That Great King is sitting behind firmly closed doors, but He Himself takes the form of human being and opens them. (Rumi)

Bulleh Shah says that the Lord comes in human form to awaken the people.

मौला आदमी बण आइआ।। ओह आइआ जग जगाइआ।।

-- बुल्लेशाह

God has come in human form; He has come to awaken the people. (Bulleh Shah)

The *Guru*s say to the same effect:

हरि जीउ नामु परिओ रामदासु।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (सोरठ म० 5, पृ० 612)

The Lord has come in human form; He is called Ram Das (Slave of God).

हमरो भरता बडो बिबेकी आपे संतु कहावै।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (आसा भगत कबीर, पृ० 476)

Our Lord is very Wise and is called a Sant. (Kabir)

पीपा प्रणवै परम ततु है सतिगुरु होइ लखावै।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (धनासरी भगत पीपा, पृ० 695)

O Peepa, the Lord is the Supreme Essence; He reveals Himself through the True Guru. (Bhagat Peepa)

सतगुरु निरंजनु सोइ।। मानुख का करि रूपु न जानु।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (रामकली म० 5, पृ० 895)

The Master is the Immaculate Lord; do not consider Him to be a human being.

हरि का सेवकु सो हरि जेहा।। भेदु न जाणहु माणस देहा।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (मारू सोलहे म० 5, पृ० 1076)

The slave of the Lord is like the Lord Himself. The form makes no difference.

Bhai Gurdas says,

एकंकार अकार करि गुर गोविंद नाउ सदवाइआ।।

ओअंकार अकार करि इक कवाउ पसाउ पसाया।।

-- भाई गुरदास, वारां गिआन रतनावली (25:1)

The formless Brahm assuming (human) form got himself called Guru (Har) Gobind. The formless One, assuming form, created the whole world by His one commanding Vibration.

He who imparts to you true knowledge, know Him to be the Lord. He is the real *Shabd*. Consider Him to be One with the Lord.

जिनि गिआनु कीआ तिसु हरि तू जाणु।। साच सबदि प्रभु एकु सिञाणु।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (बसंत म० 3, पृ० 1174)

He who imparts the True Knowledge, know him to be the Lord. He is the true Shabd; He is One with the Lord.

When a blackbird is being taught to speak, a mirror is placed before it and a man hides behind it and speaks. The blackbird looks at his own reflection in the mirror and thinks that someone of his species is sitting there before him and speaking. Similarly, the Lord is hiding behind the garb of the *Sant*s and speaks through them. The Lord is indescrib-

able and wonderful. He has to take a human form, to manifest Himself to the human beings. How can He communicate with human beings without a body? Kabir Sahib says that *Brahm* speaks under the cover of body and cannot speak without it. How can one see a personality, who has no attributes, unless it takes a form like us?

The body of a Master walks on this earth, but His soul soars to the seven skies. He is human in outer form, but God speaks through Him. He is in reality God. He is God plus man, that is, a Godman. He is the string that connects us with God. The Master is *Shabd*-personified, but He has to take a human form so that He may make us understand Him.

It is said that the King of Russia, Peter the Great, went to Holland to learn the art of ship-building. He disguised himself as a workman. There were many Russians who had fled from his tyrannical rule there, and he talked to them of Russia and advised them to return to their homes. They also felt like returning. They said, however, that the Czar had turned them out and that therefore they could not return. Peter told them that the Czar was his friend, that he would recommend them to him, and that the Czar would agree. When Peter, after learning the art of ship-building, made ready to return home, those who believed his words accompanied him.

When Peter entered the country, everyone bowed down and showed him great respect. This encouraged his companions to believe that he would make the Czar feel favourably disposed towards them and would give them permission to live in Russia. When they reached the capital, Peter left his companions and asked them to see the Czar in his court. When they went there, they were wonder-struck at seeing him sitting on the Czar's throne. They had believed him to be a labourer like themselves, and did not know that he was the Czar. They then felt grateful that the Czar had brought them home in the guise of a labourer.

The position of a Master is similar. He takes on human form to take human beings to their original home. Outward-

ly, He appears to be a prisoner amongst other prisoners; but in reality He is the king of all regions and universes. He is not a prisoner. He is, no doubt, in the guise of a prisoner; but He is here for redeeming the prisoners and has come here to free them of their bondage.

Guru Arjan says,

जिनि तुम भेजे तिनही बुलाए सुख सहज सेती घरि आउ।।
अनद मंगल गुन गाउ सहज धुनि निहचल राजु कमाउ।।
तुम घरि आवहु मेरे मीत।। तुमरे दोखी हरि आपि निवारे अपदा भई बितीत।।
प्रगट कीने प्रभ करनेहारे नासन भाजन थाके।।
घरि मंगल वाजहि नित वाजे अपुनै खसमि निवाजे।।
असथिर रहहु डोलहु मत कबहू गुर कै बचनि अधारि।।
जै जै कारु सगल भू मंडल मुख ऊजल दरबार।।
जिन के जीअ तिनै ही फेरे आपे भइआ सहाई।।
अचरजु कीआ करनैहारै नानक सचु वडिआई।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (धनासरी म० 5, पृ० 678)

He who sent you, is calling you back home to enjoy the bliss of the eternal kingdom. He who sent you, calls you back. Travel happily and return home comfortably. Sing the bliss of union with the Lord. Enjoy the eternal kingdom. Come home, O friend. The Lord will remove your sufferings. Your troubles will be ended. The Lord is manifested in the Master. He destroys and removes suffering. The welcoming Music is playing, and the Lord will welcome you there. Be firm and have no doubts; the Word of the Master will sustain you. His glory pervades the world. His Court is resplendent. He sent us into this life, and it is He who is calling us back. The Creator has done a wonder. O Nanak, all glory be to Him, the True One.

When Rani Indramati, by intense meditation, reached the True Region, she saw that Kabir Sahib was sitting in the place of the True Being (see 'Anurag Sagar'). She said,

O Lord, why did You not tell me earlier that You were the True Being, and I would have recognised You.

Kabir said,

How could you have believed at that time (before you had developed spiritually)?

All the *Sant*s who have reached the true and nameless regions are one with the Lord. When this is so, how can one be great and the other small? All are the same. If we consider one to be greater and the other smaller, it is our mistake.

संत संत को दोय कर जाने।। सो नर पड़ै नरक की खाने।।

He who differentiates between one Sant and another, goes to the region of hell.

Millions of people visit a Master and see Him. They hear His discourses and describe Him according to their own respective understanding. They call Him a kindly gentleman or a philosopher or a learned man or a wise moralist. They comfort themselves by so describing Him. But there are very few amongst them, who see the Lord in Him. Everyone praises Him according to his own degree of understanding. If the Master were only a man, he could give us nothing more than human virtues. But in fact He is more than human. One who is not developed inwardly, fails to recognise Him. He reveals Himself only to those who are sufficiently developed. He, whose eye is not trained, cannot recognise Him. How can a blind man see or recognise another person by his face? Unless the Lord or the True Being is Himself kind to a person, that person will not recognise the *Guru* as *Guru*. Unless the Perfect Master, who is Truth incarnate, reveals Himself, one cannot recognise Him. Even if the Master should live next door, an undeveloped person would not know Him. Very often, the members of a Perfect Master's own family fail to recognise His stature.

No one can recognise Him without good fortune. But one who recognises Him, recognises the Lord. Bhai Nand Lal says,

खुदा हाज़िर बुवद दायम बबीं दीदारे–पाकश रा।

-- दीवाने-गोया (पृ० 12)

The Lord is ever-present. See His Holy Vision.

When the seeing Inner Eye is opened or the Lord Himself makes Himself known, then one begins to feel the reflection of the Lord within him. The only object of Simran

(repetition) is to open the seeing Inner Eye, so that we may be able to see the Lord everywhere and in the Master, where He is manifest. But this is possible only by the Lord's Grace.

The gift of the Lord and the *Guru.*

The spiritual Path is not easy. It is, in fact, very difficult. It is said in the 'Katha Upanishad':

उत्तिष्ठत जाग्रत प्राप्य वरान्निबोधत।।
क्षुरस्य धारा निशिता दुरत्यया दुर्गं पथस्तत्कवयो वदन्ति।।

-- कठोपनिषद् (1:1:3:14)

Arise, awake. Go to the holy men and get knowledge from them. The learned say that this path is sharp as a razor's edge and it is difficult to tread it. (Katha Upanishad)

In the holy Quran, the path is described as the *Pul-Sir-at*, Razor-sharp Bridge which is sharp as a razor's edge and narrow as a hair. Bhai Gurdas also says that following the Master is like treading a path that is as narrow as a hair and as sharp as a razor. One feels diffident about entering the path after reading the difficult rules and formalities mentioned in the Vedas and other scriptures. How, one thinks, can a weak and helpless man, who is a prey to worldly attachment and *Maya*, contend against five powerful enemies: lust, anger, greed, attachment and pride? How can he cross the ocean of existence?

It is true that the Lord sends the Masters to redeem us. It is, however, not easy to serve them and act within their will. Unless the Lord and the Master shower their Grace, it is extremely difficult to progress spiritually. The Lord is merciful. He, in His compassion, unites whomsoever He likes with Himself.

आपे जगजीवनु सुखदाता आपे बखसि मिलाए।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (सिरीराग म० 3, पृ० 32)

He sustains all the world; Devotees, by His Grace, are United unto Him. The living beings have no power of their own; they have nothing to say about the matter.

It is true, however, that the Lord leads one to whom He is kind to His incarnation, the Perfect Master. The Master then connects him with *Shabd*, which takes him to the Lord.

विणु सचे दूजा सेवदे हुइ मरसनि बुटु।।
नानक कउ गुरि बखसिआ नामै संगि जुटु।।
-- आदि ग्रन्थ (गूजरी की वार म० 5, पृ० 315)

Those who Serve not the True One, serve the other one, and go to destruction. O Nanak, the Master is kind; He connects us with Shabd.

करमु होवै सतिगुरू मिलाए।। सेवा सुरति सबदि चितु लाए।।
-- आदि ग्रन्थ (माझ म० 3, पृ० 109)

By His Grace, one meets a Master and serves Him. He connects the soul with Shabd.

कृपा करहि ता सतिगुरु मेलहि हरि हरि नामु धिआई।।
-- आदि ग्रन्थ (सूही म० 4, पृ० 757)

When the Lord is kind, one meets a Master. One then contemplates on the Name of the Lord.

The virtues found in the Lord are found in the Master also. He too is the redeemer of the fallen and is merciful. He forgives their sins and bestows on them *Naam*, the Name, which helps them to rise.

पतित उधारणु सतिगुरु मेरा मोहि तिस का भरवासा।।
बखसि लए सभि सचै साहिबि सुणि नानक की अरदासा।।
-- आदि ग्रन्थ (सोरठ म० 5, पृ० 620)

My Master is the Redeemer of the fallen; I rely on Him. He hears the prayers of Nanak, and He forgives all.

गुर पूरे की वडी वडिआई हरि वडा सेवि अतुलु सुखु पाइआ।।
गुरि पूरै दानु दीआ हरि निहचलु नित बखसे चड़ै सवाइआ।।
-- आदि ग्रन्थ (गउड़ी की वार म० 4, पृ० 305)

Great is the Perfect Master, like the Lord; serve Him and gain Infinite Happiness. Through His Grace, the Lord forgives the sinner, and His Name helps him to rise.

The Master even goes to the extent of forgiving his critics, and often times even draws them to him.

कोई निंदकु होवै सतिगुरू का फिरि सरणि गुर आवै।।
पिछले गुनह सतिगुरु बखसि लए सतसंगति नालि रलावै।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (बिलावल की वार म० 3, पृ० 855)

One who slanders the Master and then takes shelter with Him, is forgiven His sin and admitted to the Holy Company.

He cleanses innumerable sinners of their sins and takes them across the Ocean of Worldly Existence.

कउण कउण अपराधी बखसिअनु पिआरे साचै सबदि वीचारि।।
भउजलु पारि उतारिअनु भाई सतिगुर बेड़ै चाड़ि।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (सोरठ म० 3, पृ० 638)

He forgives the sinners, and they contemplate on the True Name. He takes them across the Ocean on board His ship.

The Master is the True Lord. He is an Ocean of Mercy. Everything is had by His Grace.

गुरु नाराइणु दयु गुरु गुरु सचा सिरजणहारु।।
गुरि तुठै सभ किछु पाइआ जन नानक सद बलिहार।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (गउड़ी माझ म० 5, पृ० 218)

The Guru is All-pervading Lord, the Guru is Merciful Master, the Guru is True Creator Lord. When the Guru was totally satisfied, everything was obtained. Slave Nanak is forever a sacrifice to Him.

The Grace of the Lord and the Master is in the gift of *Naam*, which is the Word or Holy Spirit. The Masters always emphasize its importance and help us through it.

हरि भगताँ नो नित नावै दी वडिआई बखसीअनु नित चड़ै सवाई।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (गउड़ी की वार म० 4, पृ० 316)

The Lord blesses the devotees with Naam, and its glory increases from day to day. The Lord takes the devotees to the Original Abode; all honour be to Him.

अगम अगोचरु दरसु तेरा सो पाए जिसु मसतकि भागु।।
आपि कृपालि कृपा प्रभि धारी सतिगुरि बखसिआ हरि नामु।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (आसा म० 5, पृ० 406)

You are Unknowable and Unfathomable, and one has Your vision only by good fortune. The Lord Himself was kind, and the Master bestowed the Name.

There is no higher gift than that of *Naam* in this world or even beyond it.

नावै जेवडु होरु धनु नाही कोइ।। जिस नो बखसे साचा सोइ।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (आसा म० 3, पृ० 364)

There is no Wealth equal to that of Naam; He alone is True to whom the Lord gives it.

The gift of *Naam* and access to the Lord can be obtained only through the Master and His company.

जिस नो बखसे दे वडिआई।। गुर परसादि हरि वसै मनि आई।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (गउड़ी गुआरेरी म० 3, पृ० 159)

He alone is great, to whom the Lord is kind; by the Master's Grace He dwells in the mind.

भए कृपालु गुपाल गोबिंद।। साधसंगि नानक बखसिंद।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (आसा म० 5, पृ० 391)

The Lord of the Universe, the Cherisher of the World, has become merciful. In the the Company of the Holy (Saadh Sangat), O Nanak, He forgives us.

The way to obtain the Grace of the Master is to practice listening to the Divine Sound of *Naam* and constant remembrance of the Lord. The Master is then kind and bestows His Grace and the practice is successful. Both things, the practice and the Grace, are interdependent. They are like the two wheels on which a cart moves.

नाउ नानक बखसीस नदरी करमु होइ।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (सूही म० 1, पृ० 729)

He, in His Grace, bestows the Name.

राम नाम बिनु कवनु हमारा।।

सुख दुख सम करि नामु न छोडउ आपे बखसि मिलावणहारा।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (आसा म० 1, पृ० 416)

Without the Lord's Name, who is to be ours? I look upon pleasure and pain alike; I shall not forsake Naam, the Name of the Lord. The Lord Himslf forgives me, and Unites me with Himself.

इकु दमु साचा वीसरै सा वेला बिरथा जाइ।।

साहि साहि सदा समालीऐ आपे बखसे करे रजाइ।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (गूजरी म० 3, पृ० 506)

If the Lord is forgotten for a moment, that moment is wasted. Remember Him with every breath, and He will forgive you of His own sweet Will.

By recognising the law, and living according to the will of the Lord, the Master is pleased.

जिन्ही पछाता हुकमु तिन्ह कदे न रोवणा।।
नाउ नानक बखसीस मन माहि परोवणा।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (गूजरी की वार म० 5, पृ० 523)

They who know the Word have no regrets; O Nanak, let the Name dwell in the heart.

When the *Sant*s bestow *Naam* according to the Will of the Lord, no power can destroy it. The seed of *Naam*, which they sow in the heart, cannot but bear fruit. The disciple will certainly reach the Lord one day.

करमि मिलै सचु पाईऐ धुरि बखस न मेटै कोइ।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (सिरीराग म० 1, पृ० 62)

Truth is attained by His Grace; it is a gift bestowed by His will. No one can deprive us of it.

भगति करहि मरजीवड़े गुरमुखि भगति सदा होइ।।
ओना कउ धुरि भगति खजाना बखसिआ मेटि न सकै कोइ।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (वडहंस की वार म० 3, पृ० 589)

They alone worship the Lord, who remain dead while yet alive; the Gurumukhs worship the Lord always. The Lord blesses them with the Devotional Worship, which no one can deprive them of.

Kaal (mind, time) and *Maya* (matter) cannot destroy the seed of *Naam* planted by the Master, for the Master is beyond their reach. He is the True Being or the Lord. The lords of the Subtle and Causal regions cannot undo His acts.

गुर की दाति न मेटै कोई।। जिस बखसे तिसु तारे सोई।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ ;मारू सोलहे म० 1, पृ० 1030)

No one can undo His acts; He forgives and redeems at Will.

गुर का सबदु न मेटै कोई।। गुरु नानकु नानकु हरि सोइ।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (गोंड म० 5, पृ० 864)

No one can go against the order of the Master; O Nanak, the Master is the Lord Himself.

The bounty of the Lord is endless. There is no limit to it.

नानक पिंडु बखसीस का कबहूं निखूटसि नाहि।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (आसा म० 1, पृ० 358)

O Nanak, His bounty is endless.

This bounty can be had by a great good fortune only.

अगम अगोचरु दरसु तेरा सो पाए जिसु मसतकि भागु।।

आपि कृपालि कृपा प्रभि धारी सतिगुरि बखसिआ हरि नामु।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (आसा म० 5, पृ० 406)

You are Unknowable and Unfathomable; one has Your Vision only by good fortune. The Lord Himself was kind, and the Master bestowed Naam.

On receiving this bounty, one is released from *Avag-aman* – the Cycle of Comings-and-Goings (Birth and Death).

आपे सचा बखसि लए फिरि होइ न फेरा राम।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (वडहंस म० 3, पृ० 571)

When the Lord Himself grants forgiveness, then one does not have to enter the Cycle of Transmigration once again.

आवण जाणा ना थीऐ निज घरि वासा होइ।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (मारू म० 3, पृ० 993)

Coming and going ceases, and one dwells in the original abode. He gave the True Treasure; it was so Willed by Him.

Only a devotee gets this treasure, and no one else.

नानक सभु किछु आपे आपि है दूजा नाही कोइ।।

भगति खजाना बखसिओनु गुरमुखा सुखु होइ।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (मारू म० 3, पृ० 994)

O Nanak, He is all in all; there is no other like Him. He bestows the Treasure of Devotional Worship, and the Gurumukhs abide in peace.

जे गुरु झिड़के त मीठा लागै जे बखसे त गुर वडिआई।।

गुरमुखि बोलहि सो थाइ पाए मनमुखि किछु थाइ न पाई।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (सूही म० 4, पृ० 758)

If the Master takes me to task, I accept it gladly. If He forgives me, it is His greatness. The devotees understand Him. Those who are egotistic, fail to do so.

It is only through the Master's Grace that one can repeat the Name.

जिसु तूं बखसहि नामु जपाइ।। दूतु न लागि सकै गुन गाई।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (आसा म० 1, पृ० 416)

When He is kind, one repeats the Name; no one else can sing His praises

One should therefore not be proud. One can do nothing by oneself.

करन करावनहार सुआमी।। सगल घटा के अंतरजामी।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (गउड़ी सुखमनी म० 5, पृ० 266)

The Lord is the Doer and the Cause; He knows the secrets of all hearts.

A seeker should therefore humbly wait at the door of the Master and hope for His Grace.

Care given by the *Guru.*

The relationship between the disciple and the Master is very abstruse and cannot be fully or adequately described. The *Sant*s have, however, tried to explain it so that we may comprehend it to some extent. All worldly relationships, they point out, are based on self-interest. The relationship between the Master and the disciple, however, is pure. It is selfless. We can understand it to some extent by comparing it with the relationship between the mother and her child. The mother cares very deeply for the new-born child. She shares its pains and pleasures. The child has no power of discrimination. He cannot, for example, distinguish cleanliness from dirt. If the child is unhappy, the mother is very anxious and tries to remove the cause of its suffering, and even passes the night without sleeping. When the child is happy and smiles, the mother is happy both mentally and physically.

The mother feeds the child and lulls it to sleep. Even if the child should wet the bed on a cold winter night, she would place it on the dry portion and herself lie on the wet portion of the bed throughout the night.

When the child is small, it is ignorant of language and of its home. The mother looks at the child and the child looks at the mother. She prattles to the child and teaches it to speak. She looks after the child in all matters. She sees to it that it does not put its hand in the fire, she feeds it and keeps it clean. She carefully instructs the child, until it grows up into an adult.

Similarly, when a disciple is reborn, so to say, in the family of the Master, he is ignorant of spiritual matters. His thoughts and cares are always entangled in low desires. But the Master stills the mind and the senses of the disciple and purifies him. For spiritual progress, control of the mind and the senses by stilling them is necessary. While the Master in His mercy lends help to still the mind of the disciple, He at the same time enables him to understand and to speak that language which is unspoken. The Master is always careful about the progress of the disciple. He does everything possible to make a disciple clean, devoid of all dirt, and pure. He removes all his defects.

सुखदाता गुरु सेवीऐ सभि अवगण कढै धोइ।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (सिरीराग म० 5, पृ० 43)

Serve the Master, the giver of happiness. He washes off all vice.

A Perfect Master removes all the defects of the disciple. He gives him good advice and spiritual wisdom. He ends his bondage to the world. Great, indeed, is such a Master.

धन्नु धन्नु गुरू गुरु सतिगुरु पाधा जिनि हरि उपदेसु दे कीए सिआणे।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (गउड़ी बैरागनि म० 4, पृ० 168)

Wonderful is the Master, our Teacher. He instructs us in the Lord's Wisdom. He has made us Wise.

सिख की गुरु दुरमति मलु हिरै।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (गउड़ी सुखमनी म० 5, पृ० 286)

The Master removes the filth of flawed thinking.

सतिगुरु सिख के बंधन काटै।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (गउड़ी सुखमनी म० 5, पृ० 286)

The Master breaks the Bondage of His devotees.

The Master does not let the disciple face situations that are too difficult for him. Just as a child is ignorant, and the mother saves him from impending catastrophes, similarly, the Master protects the disciple from sufferings and difficulties, without even telling him anything about them.

अउखी घडी न देखण देई अपना बिरदु समाले।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (धनासरी म० 5, पृ० 682)

He protects His disciple; He does not let him face difficulties.

The Master removes all the sufferings and diseases of the disciple. The sufferings ordained by fate are lightened. He gives strength to the disciple, which enables him to regard the worldly sufferings as insignificant.

भए कृपाल गुसाईआ नठे सोग संताप।।
ततो वाउ न लगई सतिगुरि रखे आपि।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (गउड़ी माझ म० 5, पृ० 218)

The Lord is kind to me, and all my sufferings and sorrows have vanished. No painfully hot wind blows upon me; the Master Himself protects me.

The Master bestows the boon of *Naam* on the disciple. He feeds the disciple on spiritual food and makes him drink the Water of Eternal Life. He awakens the disciple and makes him realise his true self. He shapes his life both here and hereafter.

सतिगुरु सिख की करै प्रतिपाल।। सेवक कउ गुरु सदा दइआल।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (गउड़ी सुखमनी म० 5, पृ० 286)

The Master protects the disciple; He is always kind to those who serve Him.

सतिगुरु सिख का हलतु पलतु सवारै ।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (गउड़ी सुखमनी म० 5, पृ० 286)

The Master helps the disciple. He redeems him both here and hereafter.

The Master brings up the disciple with the love of a mother – nay, with an even greater love. He always keeps him under His protection. He is an Ocean of Love.

जिउ जननी सुतु जणि पालती राखै नदरि मझारि।।
अंतरि बाहरि मुखि दे गिरासु खिनु खिनु पोचारि।।

तिउ सतिगुरु गुरुसिख राखता हरि प्रीति पिआरि।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (गउड़ी बैरागनि म० 4, पृ० 168)

He rears the disciple like a mother, and always keeps him in His vision. He feeds him both externally and internally with Love. He enables the disciple to Love the Lord always.

It is immaterial whether the disciple is near to, or far away from the Master. He has a long reach, for His hand is the hand of God. His hands wield the power of God.

दस्ते–पीर अज़ गायबां कोताह नीस्त,

दस्ते–ऊ जुज़ क़ब्ज़ा–ए–अल्लाह नीस्त।

-- मसनवी मौलाना रूमी (दफ़्तर 1, पृ० 312)

His Hand is the Lord's and; His eyes feed on His Vision. (Rumi)

The hand of the Master protects the disciple in mountains, wastes, seas and even beyond. The white-robed swallow, it is said, leaves her young ones and goes far away, but constantly keeps them in her thought. The tortoise lays eggs on land, but lives in the water and from there, it hatches the eggs by fixing its attention on them. The Master always keeps an eye on the disciple in order to bring him up properly. He takes care of him through His spiritual force, so that he may rise above the Triple *Gunas* (qualities).

जैसी गगनि फिरंती ऊडती कपरे बागे वाली।।

एह राखै चीतु पीछै बिचि बचरे नित हिरदै सारि समाली।।

तिउ सतिगुर सिख प्रीति हरि हरि की गुरु सिख रखै जीअ नाली।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (गउड़ी बैरागनि म० 4, पृ० 168)

The mother swan travels afar in the skies, but she always remembers her off-spring and feeds them on her love. Even so does the Master Love the disciple, and Cherish him to His heart.

नानक सतिगुरु सिख कउ जीअ नालि समारै।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (गउड़ी सुखमनी म० 5, पृ० 286)

O Nanak, the Master Loves the disciple with all His heart.

हाथ देइ राखै अपने कउ सासि सासि प्रतिपाले।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (धनासरी, म० 5, पृ० 682)

He lends a helping hand and sustains the disciple at every moment.

The relationship between the Master and the disciple is that of pure love. He is very kind. He gives us instructions regarding how to return to our home, and then prays to the Lord to forgive us and free us from bondage.

ख़लक़ रा ख़्वानद सूए दरगाहे–ख़ास,
हक़ रा ख़्वानद अफ़ू कुन देह ख़ुलास।

-- मौलाना रूमी

He calls upon the people to tread the path to the Court of the Lord. He prays to the Lord to forgive and release them. (Rumi)

The Master is the true friend of the disciple. Whenever the disciple encounters difficulties, He comes to his help. The disciple, as a rule, does not know this; but such incidents take place between the disciple and the Master every day. This fact is fully supported by tradition.

Sometimes incidents take place which we do not understand at the time, but they are for our good, as we come to find out later on. A child may be sleeping comfortably, while its mother sits beside the bed and looks at its face lovingly. She fans the child and patiently waits for it to open its eyes. Similarly, the Master waits lovingly for the ignorant disciple to awake from the sleep of attachment and *Maya*.

All this care is given to the disciple, while he is in this world. But the Master himself comes and stands by the disciple at the time of his death, which is the time of utmost anxiety. He takes the soul of the disciple with Him. He is also present to help the disciple at the time of final reckoning.

सजण सेई नालि मै चलदिआ नालि चलंनि।।
जिथै लेखा मंगीऐ तिथै खडे दिसंनि।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (सूही म० 1, पृ० 729)

He accompanies the disciple; He is with the disciple on the Day of Reckoning.

मेरा गुरु परमेसरु सुखदाई।। पारब्रहम का नामु दृड़ाए अंते होइ सखाई।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (रामकली म० 5, पृ० 915)

My Guru is the Transcendent Lord, the Giver of Peace. He implants Naam of the Supreme Lord within us; in the end, He is our Help and Support.

Maulana Rumi says,

दामने–ऊ गीर जू तर बे गुमाँ, ता रही अज़ आफ़ते–आख़िर ज़मां।

-- मसनवी मौलाना रूमी (दफ़्तर 1, पृ० 73)

O foolish man! Take hold of the Garment of the Master, so that you may escape the sufferings of the next world.

The company and friendship of worldly people is transitory and evanescent. Some leave us, when we face difficulties; while others desert us in the end. But the Master is the true protector and helper of the disciple. He is always with him at the time of need or difficulty. He does not leave him alone at the time of death, or even later.

नानक कचड़िआ सिउ तोड़ि ढूढि सजण संत पकिआ।।
ओइ जीवंदे विछुड़हि ओइ मुइआ न जाही छोड़ि।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (मारू की वार डखने म० 5, पृ० 1102)

O Nanak, break with your worldly friends and brittle supports, and give your love to the Master – a firm and true friend. They leave you, while you are still alive; He does not forsake you, even after death.

Yama, the angel of Death cannot take with him any soul that is protected by the Master. The Master Himself takes His initiates with Him. Tulsi Sahib says,

सोना काई न लगे, लोहा घुन नहिं खाय।
बुरा भला जो गुरू भगत, कबहुं नरक न जाय।।

-- संत तुलसी साहिब की बानी (शब्द-17, पृ० 271)

Just as gold does not rust and iron cannot be consumed by worms, similarly, a Master's devotee, whether good or bad, never goes to hell.

The Master helps the disciple to overcome difficulties in both the worlds – the physical and the spiritual. There is no helper other than He.

ऐथै ओथै रखवाला।। प्रभ सतिगुर दीन दइआला।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (सोरठ म० 5, पृ० 628)

Here and hereafter, He is our Saviour. God, the True Guru, is Merciful to the meek.

The wealth of the Lord will always be with us as we journey. He is our life-long friend, and will accompany us

always; He protects us here and hereafter; the Lord gives us the Master out of His great mercy.

सो सतिगुरु पिआरा मेरै नालि है जिथै किथै मैनो लए छडाई।।
तिसु गुर कउ साबासि है जिनि हरि सोझी पाई।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (वडहंस की वार म० 3, पृ० 588)

The Master is always with me; He frees me both here and hereafter; all Glory be to the Master; for He made me realise the Lord.

सतिगुरु बाझु न बेली कोई।। ऐथै ओथै राखा प्रभु सोई।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (मारू म० 1, पृ० 1031)

There is no friend like the Master; by the Grace of the Lord, He is my friend both here and hereafter.

If we find a Master by good fortune, we are, so to say, insured both here and hereafter. He is very kind. He helps us in the hour of need and on dangerous occasions without expecting anything in return and without asking for any reward for it.

मिहरबां बे–रिश्वतां यारी कुनां, दर मक़ामे–सख़्त ओ दर रूदे–गराँ।।

-- मौलाना रूमी

He is my Benefactor and accepts no reward; He helps us in our difficulties; He saves us from the rocks and rapids (in the stream of life). (Maulana Rumi)

The Master is the redeemer of the poor. He helps us with His Grace. His company is more beneficial than words can express. If the Master is with us, not even an army of thousands of enemies can harm us.

जामि गुरु होइ वलि लख बाहे किआ किजइ।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (सवैये म० 4, पृ० 1399)

Him whom the Master helps, thousands cannot harm.

They are fortunate who are united with the Master. They have no anxiety.

Hand of the *Guru* on one's Head.

The Master is the great and inexhaustible storehouse of mercy. But He sometimes has strange ways of showing His

mercy. Some he redeems simply with one kind glance. He has springs of *Naam* or the Holy Spirit within Him. If He places His hand on the head or forehead of any disciple, that disciple is redeemed. The *Guru*s have described the benefits of this act. The Master, by placing His hand on the head of the devotee, gives him a vision of the Lord. *Naam* or *Shabd* manifests itself inside. The disciple benefits from the spiritual current, which flows from His hands, and all his sins are wiped off.

मै सुखी हूं सुखु पाइआ।। गुरि अंतरि सबदु वसाइआ।।
सतिगुरि पुरखि विखालिआ मसतकि धरि कै हथु जीउ।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (सिरीराग म० 1, पृ० 73)

I am happy; I am at peace; the Master so ordained it. Shabd dwells within me. He gave me the Vision of the Lord by placing His Hand on my forehead.

मेरै हीअरै रतनु नामु हरि बसिआ गुरि हाथु धरिए मेरै माथा।।
जनम जनम के किलबिख दुख उतरे गुरि नामु दीए रिनु लाथा।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (जैतसरी म० 4, पृ० 696)

The Jewel of the Lord's Naam dwells in my heart, for the Master has placed His Hand on my head. The accumulated sins of many births have been removed; the debt of ages is wiped out by Naam.

Those on whose head the Master places His hand are very fortunate and rare.

तिसु सालाही जिसु हरि धनु रासि।।
सो वडभागी जिसु गुर मसतकि हाथु।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (भैरों म० 5, पृ० 1155)

Blessed is he who has the Wealth of the Lord: He is fortunate on whose head the Master places His Hand.

जिसु मसतकि गुरि धरिआ हाथु।। कोटि मधे को विरला दासु।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (प्रभाती म० 5, पृ० 1340)

The head on which the Master places His Hand is one amongst millions of devotees.

His hand helps the disciple in situations of every description, and the disciple need not concern himself about

obtaining help from anyone else. All bow to the Master; all the worlds pay Him obeisance.

चतुर दिसा कीनो बलु अपना सिर ऊपरि करु धारिओ।।
कृपा कटाख्य अवलोकनु कीनो दास का दूखु बिदारिओ।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (धनासरी म० 5, पृ० 681)

He has extended His power in all Four Directions, and placed His Hand upon my head. Gazing upon met His Eye of Mercy, He has dispelled the sufferings of His slave.

दानि बडौ अतिवंतु महाबलि सेवकि दासि कहिए इहु तथु।।
ताहि कहा परवाह काहू की जा कै बसीसि धरिए गुरि हथु।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (सवैये म० 4, पृ० 1405)

He is bountiful, most powerful and great. Your humble slave speaks this truth: If the Master places His Hand on my head, I have no need for anybody's help.

तिउ कउ जगतु निविआ सभु पैरी पइआ जसु वरतिआ लोई।।
तिस कउ खंड ब्रहमंड नमसकारु करहि जिस कै मसतकि हथु धरिआ गुरि पूरै सो पूरा होई।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (गउड़ी की वार म० 4, पृ० 309)

The world bows to him, and falls at his feet; the world and the heavens pay homage to him on whose forehead the Master places His Hand. The Perfect Master makes him perfect.

The disciples of the Master are blessed. They live and make spiritual progress under His constant and never-failing protection.

Shelter of the *Guru.*

To take shelter with the Master, means to subordinate one's will to the will of the *Guru* and unreservedly surrender oneself to Him. This is an easy means of gaining release from the Cycle of Birth-and-Death. The disciple should implicitly rely on the Master and should give himself up to Him in the same way as one confides in a surgeon and trusts his life in his hands. Similarly, one follows the instructions of a guide when one is lost in a jungle and is sick and tired, and cannot himself find the way. The Master's task is not only to

teach, but to help the disciple in overcoming his difficulties. He alone is a true friend, who not only advises us regarding what to do in difficulties, but also helps us in freeing ourselves from them.

Let us suppose that one wants to go to a foreign country. He makes enquiries about travel by air or by sea. When he sets out on his journey, he takes his place on a specific ship or plane. He completely assigns himself to the care of the captain or the pilot and has no further worries. In actual fact, he has to depend on the captain or the pilot. If the passenger should happen to fall into the sea, the captain, without any payment, would try to save him. The case of those travelling in the spiritual regions is the same. In order to understand spiritual matters and the teachings of a Master, one should use one's intellect and discrimination; but after one takes shelter with a Master, he should surrender to Him unconditionally. One should follow the path indicated by the Master. He knows the path we have to tread, while we are ignorant of it. We have to rely on His help, and by doing so we can fulfil our ideal of progress in the spiritual regions.

To take shelter means to have full confidence in the Master and to be guided by Him. One should follow His orders, without considering their so-called propriety. Whatever the Master directs us to do is for our good, although at the time it may not appear to be proper or beneficial for us. The disciple should obey Him in word, deed and spirit.

When the disciple surrenders himself to the Master for good, the Master looks after him in every way. Just as a mother brings up her child, so the Master looks after His disciple. As the disciple becomes purified, the Master gives him spiritual wealth. The child who sits in the lap of his mother, need not worry, because all his worries are hers. He is care-free and happy. Similarly, the disciple, after taking shelter with the Master, becomes care-free and happy.

The *Guru*s call out with raised hands,

संतहु सुनहु सुनहु जन भाई गुरि काढी बाह कुकीजै।।
जे आतम कउ सुखु सुखु नित लोड़हु ताँ सतिगुर सरनि पवीजै।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (कलिआन म० 4, पृ० 1326)

The Master gives the clarion call: He who wants constant Spiritual Bliss, let him take shelter with the Master.

In the 'Bhagavad Gita', Lord Krishna, as a teacher, gives the following advice to his disciples:

सर्वधर्मान्परित्यज्य मामेकं शरणं व्रज।
अहं त्वा सर्वपापेभ्यो मोक्षयिष्यामि मा शुचः।।

-- श्रीमद्भगवद्गीता (18:66)

Do thou, renouncing all religious rites, take refuge unto me alone, and I will free thee evermore from all thy sins. So do not grieve.

It is easier to practice meditation, than to surrender unconditionally to the Master. When one takes shelter with the Master, one must be like a child. He must give up his own will and conform to the will of the Master. He must surrender himself to the Master in word, deed and spirit. This is difficult, but if owing to good fortune one gets shelter, then all his desires will be fulfilled. He will merge in the form of the *Guru*.

The shelter of the Master is gained only as the result of great good fortune. To take shelter with the Master is to take shelter with the Lord. The Master is the Lord.

हरि गुर सरणाई पाईऐ वणजारिआ मित्रा वडभागि परापति होइ।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (सिरीराग म० 3, पृ० 81)

I have no friend but Thee, O Lord; I take refuge with the Master. I find the Lord there; O fellow travelling merchant of small worldly wares, come, seek a Master and gather the Everlasting Wealth.

जा कै मसतकि करम प्रभि पाए।। साध सरणि नानक ते आए।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (गउड़ी सुखमनी म० 5, पृ० 296)

He who is so destined by the Lord, O Nanak, takes shelter with a Sant.

When the Lord is kind, a devotee reaches this stage.

जो सतगुर की सरणागती हउ तिन कै बलि जाउ।।
दरि सचै सची वडिआई सहजे सचि समाउ।।
नानक नदरी पाईऐ गुरमुखि मेलि मिलाउ।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (सिरीराग म० 3, पृ० 31)

Blessed are they who find shelter with Him, all glory to the True Court of the Lord; come, come to this place of Eternal Calm. O Nanak, when He is kind, the devotees meet the Master.

The *Guru*s have described the various benefits that result from taking shelter with the Master. The mind is controlled; one is freed from all grieves, sufferings, pains and pleasures, and the three *Guna*s or modes of tendency. One is freed from the burden of karmas.

मन महि मुंद्रा हरि गुर सरणा।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (रामकली म० 1, पृ० 879)

In your mind, let your ear-rings be the Sanctuary of the Guru, the Lord.

गुरु पूरा पाइओ मेरे भाई। रोग सोग सभ दूख बिनासे सतिगुर की सरणाई।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ ;आसा म० 5, पृ० 395)

I met a Perfect Master, and I took refuge with Him. In the Sanctuary of the True Guru, all illnesses, sorrows and sufferings were dispelled.

हरख सोग का नगरु इहु कीआ।। से उबरे जो सतिगुर सरणीआ।।
तृहा गुणा ते रहै निरारा सो गुरमुखि सोभा पाइदा।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (मारू म० 5, पृ० 1075)

This body is the city of pleasure and pain; he alone is saved who takes shelter with the Master. One who remains untouched by the three qualities (Gunas)- such a Gurumukh is blessed with glory.

The mind becomes pure. All desires are fulfilled, and one gets happiness.

मन मेरे गुर सरणि आवै ता निरमलु होइ।।
मनमुख हरि हरि करि थके मैलु न सकी धोइ।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (सिरीराग म० 3, पृ० 39)

O my mind, coming to the Sanctury of the Guru, you shall become immaculate and pure. The self-willed manmukhs have grown weary of chanting the Name of the Lord, Hari, Hari; hence their filth cannot be removed,

जगत उधारण सेई आए जो जन दरस पिआसा।।
उन की सरणि परै सो तरिआ संतसंगि पूरन आसा।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (गउड़ी म० 5, पृ० 207)

The Masters come to redeem the world, and the world thirsts for their sight. Those humble beings who thirst for His blessed vision, those who seek their Sanctury, are ferried across; in the company of the Sants, their hopes are fulfilled.

Egotism and darkness are banished, and Light appears.

जगतु जलंदा डिठु मैं हउमै दूजै भाइ।।
नानक गुर सरणाई उबरे सचु मनि सबदि धिआइ।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (सोरठ की वार म० 3, पृ० 651)

The world is burning in egotism and the persuit of duality. O Nanak, those who seek the Guru's Sanctury alone are saved; within their minds, they meditate on the True Shabd.

करन करावन सरनि परिआ।।
गुर परिसादि सहज घरु पाइआ मिटिआ अंधेरा चंदु चड़िया।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (आसा म० 5, पृ० 393)

I took shelter with the Creator and the Cause, and then I reached my Home easily through the Master's Grace. The darkness disappeared and the Moon of Wisdom has risen.

The gift of Spiritual Life is obtained and *Naam* manifests itself.

जीअ दानु गुरि पूरै दीआ राम नामि चितु लाए।।
आपि कृपालु कृपा करि देवै नानक गुर सरणाए।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (आसा म० 4, पृ० 443)

The Perfect Guru has given me the gift of Spiritual Life, and I centre my consciousness on the Lord's Name. The Merciful Lord Himself given this gift to me, O Nanak. I take to the Sanctury of the Guru.

गुपता नामु वरतै विचि कलजुगि घटि घटि हरि भरपूरि रहिआ।।
नामु रतनु तिना हिरदै प्रगटिआ जो गुर सरणाई भजि पइआ।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (प्रभाती म० 3, पृ० 1334)

Naam, the Name of the Lord, is hidden, but is pervasive in the dark age of Kali Yuga. The Lord is totally pervading and permeating each and every heart. The Jewel of Naam is revealed within the hearts of those, who hasten to the Sanctury of the Guru.

The fear of death is removed. One does not have to go to hell. The Cycle of Birth-and-Death comes to an end and one crosses the Ocean of Worldly Existence.

जमकालु निहाले सास आव घटै बेतालिआ।।
नानक गुर सरणाई उबरे हरि गुर रखवालिआ।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (सारंग की वार म० 3, पृ० 1248)

The Messenger of Death keeps his gaze on their breath, and the life of the sprites decreases day by day. Nanak has taken to the Sanctury of the Guru, and is saved. The Guru, the Lord, is his Protector.

नानक नरकि न जाहि कबहूं हर संत हरि की सरणी।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (आसा म० 5, पृ० 460)

All the Master's actions are pure; He protects us. O Nanak, a devout disciple never goes to hell. He is under the protection of the Lord.

जिन कउ पूरबि लिखिआ सेई नामु धिआइ।।
नानक गुर सरणागती मरै न आवै जाइ।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (सिरीराग म० 5, पृ० 53)

He who is fortunate contemplates on the Name; O Nanak, one who has this Shelter does not come and go.

दुख हरत करता सुखह सुआमी सरणि साधू आइआ।।
संसारु सागरु महा बिखड़ा पल एक माहि तराइआ।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (धनासरी म० 5, पृ० 691)

O Blissful Lord, the destroyer of pain; he who takes Shelter with the Sants, crosses this Ocean of Existence, which is full of sufferings.

The Lord forgives the sins of one who takes shelter with the Master. He becomes fearless and balanced, and attains the highest abode. He is honoured in the Court of the Lord and is united with Him. By taking shelter with the Master, the devotee gets shelter with the Lord. One, who is separated from his mother, suffers a great deal. One, who has not taken shelter with the Master, is like a child, who is separated from his mother.

The *Guru*s, therefore, emphasize the point that one should take shelter with the Master.

Words of the *Guru.*

When one is reborn in the house of the Master, that is, when one takes shelter with Him, one should give up all previous spiritual or other practices and ask Him what to do. Other practices cannot free one from birth and death and unite one with the Lord. It is the duty of the disciple to follow the path taught him by the Master. Whatever he does in obedience to the wishes of the Master is giving devotion to Him. If a passenger follows the directions of the boatman while in his boat, he gets across the river. He should therefore obey the directions without any objection. His welfare depends upon his doing so.

The Master is responsible for His disciple in all matters. The disciple should therefore lovingly carry out the orders of the Master, and not let his own whims interfere with them, even though the Master's orders may sometimes appear a trifle strange at the first glance. The Master is all-powerful. There may be something which we do not understand. Hafiz Sahib says,

ब–मै सज्जादा रंगीं कुन गरत पीरे–मुग़ां गोयद।
कि सालिक बेख़बर न बवद ज़ राहो–रस्मे मंज़िल हा।

-- दीवाने-हाफ़िज़ (पृ० 29)

Dye your prayer-cloth in wine if the Master so directs; for He is not unaware of the path and its ways.

How can he who merely does lip-service and does not carry out the Master's orders gain spiritual salvation? He who obeys the Master is dear to Him.

Be ye doers of the Word and not hearers only. (St James 1-22)

Engage in the practice of listening to *Shabd*. Do not merely give lip-service to the Master. How can you derive full benefit by merely seeing and hearing the Master? The *Guru*s say:

गुर के बचन सति जीइ धारहु।। माणस जनमु देह निस्तारहु।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (सवैये म० ४, पृ० 1401)

Take the words of the Master to be true. Let them dwell in your heart and make your life fruitful.

The words of the Master are not separate from Him. The Master pervades them. His words are outpourings of His heart and are permeated with His Truth and soul-force. Such words permeate the hearts of spiritually-minded persons like arrows and produce a sweet pain, which cannot be described.

अंतरि पिआस उठी प्रभ केरी सुणि गुर बचन मनि तीर लगईआ।।
मन की बिरथा मन ही जाणै अवरु कि जाणै को पीर परईआ।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (बिलावल म० 4, पृ० 835)

The devotee thirsts for the Lord, and the words of the Master pierce him like arrows. Only the wounded know these pains; others do not realise them.

The words of the Master bear fruit in accordance with the extent to which you act upon them. To obey the Master, is to give devotion to Him. Guru Ramdas says,

खरे खरोए बैठत ऊठत मारगि पंथि धिआवैगो।।
सतिगुर बचन बचन है सतिगुर पाधरु मुकति जनावैगो।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (कानड़ा म० 4, पृ० 1309)

Think of Him while sitting, standing or walking; the Master is the Word and the Word is the Master. You will be emancipated through the Word.

The words of the Master are very sweet and pleasant. You are filled with Nectar through them. By acting in accordance with the words of the Master one becomes immortal.

सतिगुरु बचनु बचनु है नीको गुर बचनी अंमृतु पावैगो।
जिउ अंबरीकि अमरा पद पाए सतिगुर मुख बचन धिआवैगो।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (कानड़ा म० 4, पृ० 1311)

Blessed is the Guru's Word, for with it one attains the Lord's Nectar, as Ambarish, the king, attained the eternal state by uttering ever the Guru's Word.

To repeat the mantra given by the Master, according to His directions, and to practice it, is true devotion and the Essence of Truth.

गुर का बचन जपि मंतु।। एहा भगति सार ततु।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (रामकली म० 5, पृ० 895)

Chant the Mantra of the Guru's Word. This is the essence of True Devotional Worship.

To practice as directed by the Master is right thought.

सतिगुर बचन कमावणे सचा एहु वीचारु।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (सिरीराग म० 5, पृ० 52)

Act according to the instructions of the True Guru, this is the True Philosophy.

The Word of the Master dwells with the devotee. Water cannot drown it, the air cannot dry it, thief cannot steal it and fire cannot burn it. It is imperishable, everlasting and inscrutable. It is the sustainer of the helpless. It protects one's honour. Through it one is freed from death and all doubts are destroyed.

गुर का बचनु बसै जीअ नाले।।

जलि नही डूबै तसकरु नही लेवै भाहि न साकै जाले।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (धनासरी म० 5, पृ० 679)

The Word of the Master dwells with us; water cannot drown it, a thief cannot steal it, fire cannot burn it.

गुर का बचनु जीअ कै संगि।। गुर कै बचनि रचै राम कै संगि।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (गउड़ी गुआरेरी म० 5, पृ० 177)

The Word of the Master is imperishable. The Word of the Master frees one from death. The Word of the Master is inscrutable. The Word of the Master removes all doubts.

The *Guru*s direct that *Ram Naam* (the Name of the Lord) be praised through the words of the Master. One can journey towards one's Pristine Home by following His directions. The Cycle of Birth-and-Death will cease. All of this can be had only in the company of the *Sant*s.

राम नामु गुर बचनी बोलहु।। संत सभा महि इहु रसु टोलहु।।

गुरमति खोजि लहहु घरु अपना बहुड़ि न गरभ मझारा हे।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (मारू म० 1, पृ० 1030)

Practice the Lord's Name, as directed by the Master; search for it in the company of Sants. Seek for the Original Home as directed by them. The Cycle of Birth-and-Death will then cease.

This wealth cannot be had by those, who are puffed up with pride. Many persons who visit the Master sing holy hymns, but what the hymns tell of, is fruitful only in the case of those who practice the teachings of the hymns and the directions of the Master, believing them to be true.

सेवक सिख पूजण सभि आवहि सभि गावहि हरि हरि ऊतम बानी।।
गाविआ सुणिआ तिन का हरि थाइ पावै जिन सतिगुर की आगिआ सति सति करि मानी।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (धनासरी म० 4, पृ० 669)

Seekers and disciples come to worship, and all sing the holy hymns. The singing of those alone is fruitful, who act on the words of the Master, as True.

Those, who see the Master repeatedly, begin to love Him, and those who act on His words, believing them to be true, are dear to the Lord.

लगि लगि प्रीति बहु प्रीति लगाई लगि साधू संगि सवारे।।
गुर के बचन सति सति करि माने मेरे ठाकुर बहुतु पिआरे।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (नट म० 4, पृ० 982)

Those who visit the Master repeatedly learn to love Him very much. They believe His words to be True, and they are very dear to the Lord.

Practice as the Master directs. You will then recognise *Shabd* and easily reach the abode of peace. You will enjoy real bliss and cross the Ocean of Existence.

गुरि कहिआ सा कार कमावहु।। सबदु चीन्हि सहज घरि आवहु।।
साचै नाइ वडाई पावहु।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (बिलावल म० 3, पृ० 832)

Do as the Master says, and you will recognise Shabd and reach the eternal abode. The Eternal Name glorifies.

गुर का कहिआ जे करे सुखी हू सुखु सारु।।
गुर को करणी भउ कटीऐ नानक पावहि पारु।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (सारंग की वार म० 3, पृ० 1248)

He who does as directed by the Master is happy and gets the Essence of Peace. He is freed from fear and is ferried across.

It is very necessary to obey the Master and act within His Will. The salvation of the disciple depends upon this. Everyone may see the Master. But it is very necessary to obey His words and practice *Shabd* imparted by Him.

सतिगुर नो सभु को वेखदा जेता जगतु संसारु।।
डिठै मुकति न होवई जिचरु सबदि न करे वीचारु।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (वडहंस की वार म० 3, पृ० 594)

All the living beings of the world behold the True Guru. However, one is not liberated by merely having His vision, but by contemplating His Shabd.

The Master should, however, be an adept in the practice of *Shabd* or Divine Sound so that He may make Shabd dwell in us. *Shabd* is not in the nine doors of the body. Only He who has knowledge of *Shabd* beyond the nine doors deserves to be called a Master. When one gets such a Master, he should act according to His instructions and remain within His will. By doing so he will make his life fruitful, and will emancipate his family also. He does not then have to suffer.

तिन का जनमु सफलु है जो चलहि सतगुर भाइ।।
कुलु उधारहि आपणा धन्नु जणेदी माइ।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (सिरीराग म० 3, पृ० 28)

The life of those who obey the Master is blessed. Their mothers are blessed and their family is redeemed.

गुर के भाणै जो चलै दुखु न पावै कोइ।।
गुर के भाणे विचि अंमृतु है सहजे पावै कोइ।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (सिरीराग म० 3, पृ० 31)

One who acts in harmony with the Guru's Will, does not suffer any ill. Amrit, the Ambrosial Nectar, is in the Guru's Will. With submissive ease, it is obtained.

By remaining within His Will, a disciple gets the Nectar of immortality. As a result, he reaches the Pristine Abode.

मन मेरे सतिगुर कै भाणै चलु।।
निज घरि वसहि अंमृतु पीवहि ता सुख लहहि महलु।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (सिरीराग म० 3, पृ० 37)

O mind, listen to the Master, and act on His Advice. Come to live in the Original Home. Drink the Nectar and be happy.

Who acts upon the words of the Master? He alone, to whom the Master is kind.

जिस नो भए गोबिंद दइआला।। गुर का बचनु तिनि बाधिओ पाला।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (प्रभाती म० 5, पृ० 1348)

He to whom the Lord is kind acts on the words of the Master.

He who acts upon the words of the Master and realises the Lord, has no equal. We should, therefore, repeat the Name of the Lord.

मेरे मन नामु हरी भजु सदा दीबाणु।।

जो हरि महलु पावै गुर बचनी तिसु जेवडु अवरु नाही किसै दा ताणु।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (गोंड म० 4, पृ० 861)

O mind, forever repeat the Name of the Lord. He who obeys reaches the Abode of the Lord. One who obtains the Abode of the Lord, through the Guru's teachings - there is no one as powerful as He.

The *Gurus* describe many benefits that result from acting upon the words of the Master. One praises the Lord. He becomes dyed in His colour. His tongue tastes the Nectar. All of his actions prove successful. He gets the possession of the Nine Treasures. Diseases and fevers are banished. One's desires are fulfilled. The mind becomes still. Egotism is destroyed. Pain and pleasure appear to be the same. Harmful desires and cravings are banished. Sins are gotten rid of and sinners are redeemed. The poison of *Maya* leaves us. One becomes indifferent as to whether one is in the home or outside. The snare of death is destroyed and death does not come near. One does not go to hell. Birth and death cease. Great contentment is experienced. One concentrates easily. The Nectar is obtained. One is connected with the Name and his devotion proves fruitful. On realising the Lord, the seeker and the Lord become One.

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PSEUDO-MASTERS
(*Dimbhi Guru* डिंभी गुरु)

***Dimbhi Guru* or a Pseudo~ or False and Imposter Master** is an inefficient and inadept master, who is ignorant even of himself, but is ever ready to advise others. Of such persons it is said,

अन्धा गुरु और अन्धा चेला।। नरका नरकी धकम धकेला।।

Blind masters and blind disciples, the one leads the other to hell.

If one follows such a dangerous person, then the following Punjabi saying applies to him:

आप डुबेंदे बाहमणां जजमान भी गाले।।

O Brahmin, you will drown yourself, and your followers will be drowned with you.

One cannot cross a stream by catching hold of the tail of a sheep. Rather,

भेड़े पूछल लगीए नित सहसा जीए।।

-- भाई गुरदास, वारां गिआन रतनावली (34:7)

How can one possibly get across the water by catching hold of the tail of a sheep? (Bhai Gurdas)

But yes, one can cross a stream by catching hold of the tail of a cow.

The world is full of the so-called masters. They are to be met with at every step. There are more masters than disciples. It often happens that when seekers after Truth wish to meet a *Guru*, they visit these self-styled masters and serve them with faith. But when, while living with them at close quarters, they find that the master is also entangled in the mind and senses like others and is hankering after wealth, they decide not to have him as a master and quite frequently raise an agitation against the institution of Mastership itself.

They even go to the extent of saying that the mention made about a Master in the scriptures was valid only at the time it was made and not for all times; that there is no necessity for a Master in these days, and that the scriptures can serve the same purpose as a Perfect Master. The result is that the living Master is not worshipped, but instead the custom of worshiping the dead has come into vogue. No living *Sant* or *Mahatma* is respected, but instead, houses are decorated with pictures of dead Seers and *Sant*s. The real roses are not being smelled, but paper flowers have become the fashion of the day.

No one studies the book of his own self, but studies paper books instead. No one seeks a living *Sant*. Instead, worldly newspapers, monthly magazines and tracts are made to serve the purpose. The ignorant think that the Master should be a learned man, who can make speeches or give discourses. They think that He should be the author of some books, should possess occult powers for granting boons or flinging curses; should be able to read the thoughts of others and gather persons around Him. If this were correct, then all learned persons should be Masters, but it is always easy to see that learned persons are also subject to the vagaries of the mind and senses, as are others. The condition of these theoretical thinkers is similar to that of a donkey which carries a load of books or a bundle of sandalwood, but is ignorant of the knowledge in the books or the scent in the sandalwood. If persons with occult powers are masters, then the hypnotists and magicians, who wander about the streets to earn money, are also masters.

The real Master knows the essence of Spirituality and though He is possessed of various powers, He does not use them for the purpose of show. It has happened that because the number of impostors is very large, the true and real *Sant*s are also quite frequently considered to be impostors. As a consequence, some people do not believe in them. One, who has been bitten by a snake, is apt to be afraid of a rope. After

once being deceived by a pseudo-master, people sometimes hesitate to believe in a real Master. Because of our painful experiences with impostors, we have become extremely cautious.

It is very difficult for a seeker to find a Perfect Master and to recognise Him. One who is not familiar with a path cannot be certain of the sights on the way. It is a mistake to test a Master, but there is also a risk in blindly accepting a Master because an imperfect master cannot lead one to salvation.

केते गुर चेले फुनि हूआ।। काचे गुर ते मुकति न हूआ।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (रामकली दखनी म० 1, पृ० 932)

I have had so many Gurus and disciples. Through a false Guru, liberation is not found.

Being a Master is not similar to carrying on a profession. It is a gift of the Lord. But the impostors and pretenders have lowered its prestige.

सिखा कंनि चड़ाईआ गुरु ब्राहमणु थिआ।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (आसा की वार म० 1, पृ० 471)

Something is whispered in the ear, and the Brahmin becomes a master!

Of what use is a master who cannot remove our doubts? He will be drowned, and those who accompany him will also be drowned.

कबीर माइ मूंडउ तिह गुरू की जा ते भरमु न जाइ।।
आप डुबे चहु बेद महि चेले दीए बहाइ।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (सलोक भगत कबीर, पृ० 1370)

O Kabir, shave the head of the self-styled master, as that of an outcast, for he cannot dispel doubts. Such masters are lost in the Vedas. They drown their disciples also. (Kabir)

They are drowned in scriptural learning, and so will their disciples be drowned. He, who has not crossed the Ocean of the Universe himself, cannot carry others across.

जो डुबंदो आपि सो तराए किन्ह खे।।
तारेदड़ो भी तारि नानक पिर सिउ रतिआ।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (मारू की वार डखने म० 5, पृ० 1101)

He who is himself sinking cannot save others. O Nanak, he who is imbued with Love is saved, and saves others.

When a so-called master is himself blind, how can he save his disciples?

गुरू जिना का अंधुला चेले नाही ठाउ।।
बिनु सतिगुर नाउ न पाईऐ बिनु नावै किआ सुआउ।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (सिरीराग म० 1, पृ० 58)

When the master is blind, the disciple also stumbles around blindly. Without the True Guru, the Name is not obtained.

Guru Amardas says that one who does not know the inner path and whose inner eye has not been opened, cannot see beyond this gross world. How then can he guide others on this path?

विणु पारसै पूज न होवई विणु मन परचे अवरा समझाए।।
गुरू सदाए अगिआनी अंधा किसु ओहु मारगि पाए।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (गूजरी म० 3, पृ० 491)

Without becoming the Philosopher's Stone, he does not inspire others to worship the Lord; without instructing his own mind, how can he instruct others? The ignorant, blind man calls himself the Guru, but to whom can he show the way?

Such a so-called master is himself being robbed by the five dacoits of lust, anger, greed, attachment and egotism. He is ignorant and cannot recognise the spiritual path.

अंधा आगू जे थीऐ किउ पाधरु जाणै।।
आपि मुसै मति होछीऐ किउ राहु पछाणै।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (सूही म० 1, पृ० 767)

When a blind man leads, how can one know the way? His mind is shallow, and he will not find the way.

Such a master tells untruths, feeds on the dead, and is looted by *Maya*. He is totally blind, not for lack of sight, but for lack of enlightenment. Such a person is called blind.

अंधे एहि न आखीअनि जिन मुखि लोइण नाहि।।
अंधे सेई नानका खसमहु घुथे जाहि।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (रामकली की वार म० 2, पृ० 954)

The truly blind are not those who have no eyes to see. O Nanak, the truly blind are those who do not see the Lord.

He who is such a blind person and yet claims to guide others, undoubtedly misleads his companions. He is not honoured in the Court of the Lord.

कूडु बोलि मुरदारु खाइ।। अवरी नो समझावणि जाइ।।
मुठा आपि मुहाए साथै।। नानक ऐसा आगू जापै।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (माझ की वार म० 1, पृ० 140)

He tells lies and feeds on the dead, yet he presumes to guide others; he is deceiving himself and deceives others. O Nanak, such are the leaders of today.

Guru Nanak says,

नानक अंधा होइ कै दसे राहै सभसु मुहाए साथै।।
अगै गइआ मुहे मुहि पाहि सु ऐसा आगू जापै।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (माझ की वार म० 1, पृ० 140)

O Nanak, when a blind man leads, he misleads; when he ventures beyond, he comes to grief.

Only he, who is blind, will tread the path shown by such a blind man. If he has eyes to see the Truth, he will not tread the wrong path.

अंधे कै राहि दसिऐ अंधा होइ सु जाइ।।
होइ सुजाखा नानका सो किउ उझड़ि पाइ।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (रामकली की वार म० 2, पृ० 954)

Only a blind man will follow the path shown by a blind man. O Nanak, a man with eyes will disdain his leadership.

A blind master cannot dispel doubts. He does not know the right path and goes astray. He is full of the poison of *Maya* and is bound by *Maya*.

अंधे गुरू ते भरमु न जाई।। मूलु छोडि लागे दूजै भाई।।
बिखु का माता बिखु माहि समाई।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (गउड़ी म० 3, पृ० 232)

A blind master cannot dispel doubts. He abandons reality and goes astray. He is so imbued with the poison of Maya, that the poison fills him.

When a master is blind, his disciples also remain in the dark. They follow their own will and tell untruths.

गुरू जिना का अंधुला सिख भी अंधे करम करेनि।।
ओइ भाणै चलनि आपणै नित झूठो झूठु बोलेनि।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (रामकली की वार म० 3, पृ० 951)

If the master is blind, his disciples do dark deeds; they act according to their own wills, and always tell untruths.

It is not easy to be a True Master. It is a job of great responsibility. The Master has to unite the soul of the disciple with the Lord. This can only be done by one who is fully competent. Anyone else causes harm and damage to himself. He goes astray. This applies to all impostors.

कबीर बामनु गुरू है जगत का भगतन का गुरु नाहि।।
अरझि उरझि कै पचि मूआ चारउ बेदहु माहि।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (सलोक भगत कबीर, पृ० 1377)

O Kabir, the Brahmin is the master of the world, but he is not a Guru for true devotees; he entangles himself and dies in the study of the Vedas.

There should exist a True Master, from whom something can be gained, and who has something to give.

फरीदा सोई सरवरु ढूढि लहु जिथहु लभी वथु।।
छपड़ि ढूढै किआ होवै चिकड़ि डुबै हथु।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (सलोक सेख फ़रीद, पृ० 1380)

O Farid, find the pool where you can get the Treasure. What is the use of searching in a shallow pool? You will only smear your hand with mud.

He alone, who practices Spirituality, has the right to preach it. Guru Arjan Dev says,

आपि कमाउ अवरा उपदेस।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (गउड़ी गुआरेरी म० 5, पृ० 185)

First practice, and then preach.

Only the teachings of one, in whom the Lord dwells, is of help.

जिस कै अंतरि बसै निरंकारु।। तिस की सीख तरै संसारु।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (गउड़ी सुखमनी म० 5, पृ० 296)

He in whom the Formless One dwells, His advice takes one across.

One, who is filled with the poison of mind and matter, and of wealth and women, but talks sweetly to the people, deserves to go to hell.

अंतरि बिखु मुखि अंमृतु सुणावै।। जम पुरि बाधा चोटा खावै।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (गउड़ी म० 5, पृ० 194)

He who has poison in him but speaks sweetly, goes to hell and is sorely afflicted.

Such a person's character is low and he does wrong acts. His heart is devoid of love for the Lord, but he can always please the people with clever words and phrases. The Lord knows every heart, and is not pleased with external formalities. He who himself does not practice, but teaches others is born again and again.

रहत अवर कछु अवर कमावत।। मनि नही प्रीति मुखहु गंढ लावत।।
जाननहार प्रभू परबीन।। बाहरि भेख न काहू भीन।।
अवर उपदेसै आपि न करै।। आवत जावत जनमै मरै।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (गउड़ी सुखमनी म० 5, पृ० 269)

His speech and action do not agree; he has no Love, but only lip-sympathy: The Lord knows all, and does not judge by outward appearances. One who does not practice what he preaches, is born again and again.

Those who do not practice, but simply preach and engage in arguments, do not know *Shabd* or the real substance.

उपदेसु करै आपि न कमावै ततु सबदु न पछानै।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (आसा म० 5, पृ० 380)

Those who preach, but do not practice, do not know Shabd.

It is therefore necessary that one should first cleanse one's mind, make *Ram-Naam* dwell in one's heart, and then instruct others.

प्रथमे मनु परबोधै अपना पाछै अवर रीझावै।।
राम नाम जपु हिरदै जापै मुख ते सगल सुनावै।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (आसा म० 5, पृ० 381)

He should first enlighten his own mind, and should then try to persuade others. His mind should first repeat the Name of the Lord, and then he may instruct others.

Just as a spoon, even when smeared with pudding, remains unaware of the taste of the pudding; similarly, those *Guru*s, who are not imbued with *Naam* and have not tasted it, are of little use.

कड़छीआ फिरंन्हि सुआउ न जाणन्हि सुअीआ।।
सेई मुख दिसंन्हि नानक रते प्रेम रसि।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (गूजरी की वार म० 5, पृ० 521)

The spoon moves through the food, but it knows not the taste thereof. O Nanak, seek out those, who are imbued with the Lord's essence.

It is useless for those, who have no faith in their mind, to meditate and contemplate.

जिन कउ मन की परतीति नाही नानक से किआ कथहि गिआनै।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (सोरठ की वार म० 3, पृ० 647)

Those who know not their own mind, O Nanak, how can they impart knowledge?

Those who have deceit in their hearts but talk loftily are simply churning water; no butter or any other good thing comes out of it. Deluded by *Maya*, such people are led astray. What useful advice can they give?

ह्रिदै कपटु मुख गिआनी।। झूठे कहा बिलोवसि पानी।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (सोरठ भगत कबीर, पृ० 656)

They have deceit in their heart, yet they utter words of wisdom. They tell lies and churn but water. (Kabir)

बिखिआ माते भरमि भुलाए उपदेसु कहहि किसु भाई।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (रामकली म० 3, पृ० 909)

Those who are full of poison and doubts, how can they guide others?

Sit in the company of a person, who is filled with the Divine Nectar. If a master has something to give, his servant will get it; but if he has nothing to give, the servant cannot possibly get anything. If the master is naked and hungry, how can his servant be well-clothed and well-fed? If, while serving a master, one is still accountable to the Lord of Death, his service is a source of suffering. We should serve a Master who is God-personified, and the sight of whom, is fruitful, so that one is not called upon to render account to the Lord of Death. Guru Ramdas says,

साहिबु जिस का नंगा भुखा होवै तिस दा नफरु किथहु रजि खाए।।
जि साहिब कै घरि वथु होवै सु नफरै हथि आवै अणहोदी किथहु पाए।।
जिस दी सेवा कीती फिरि लेखा मंगीऐ सा सेवा अउखी होई।।
नानक सेवा करहु हरि गुर सफल दरसन की फिरि लेखा मंगै न कोई।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (गउड़ी की वार म० 4, पृ० 306)

One who has a naked and hungry beggar for a master – how can he be well-fed? Only what the master has, the servant can have – the servant cannot have that which the master has not. To serve a master and still be accountable to death, is of no avail. O Nanak, serve the Lord-like Master. Seeing Him is fruitful; there can be no day of reckoning for His servant.

The world is full of false masters. The true Master is he who is imbued with *Shabd* and who practices it, and connects the disciple with *Shabd*. He who serves a master of the other sort is ensnared in *Maya*. His life as a human being, which is a rare opportunity, is wasted. The *Guru*s say,

झूठे गुरू के पच्छ को, तजत न कीजै बार।
द्वार न पावै सब्द का भटकै बारंबार।।

-- कबीर साखी संग्रह भाग-1 (झूठे गुरु का अंग 11, पृ० 14)

Do not delay in giving up a false master, for with him you will wander and will not find Shabd.

Seeing such deplorable conditions, people talk ill of Gurudom and criticize even the true holy men and *Sant*s. They are so much disgusted with them that they hesitate to go even to true *Sant*s. Even when they do go, they look at them with clouded vision and form wrong ideas about them.

The Lord, the *Sant*, and the company of the *Sant*s are the three basic principles of Spirituality. One cannot gain salvation without a *Sant* and His company. If we are on close terms with a holy man, the radiance of His holiness and perfection will begin to shine in us and all our doubts will be removed. True holiness can never remain hidden. A Perfect Master's sweet words and spiritual power will inevitably affect us, and we will begin to understand the Master as He really is.

The impostors are so numerous in the world that many people think there is no true Master, and that if there is one it is very difficult to find Him. As a consequence, they sit resigned and believe themselves to be helpless. But if one really has a sincere desire to meet a Master, the Lord Himself will arrange for a meeting. The true Master will come of His own accord. This is the Law of the Lord.

Knock and it shall be opened. Ask and it shall be given unto you. (Bible, Matt. 7:7)

The *Guru* appears when the *chela* (disciple) is ready. In fact, the true Master Himself searches out a disciple.

The *Guru*s say:

पिता कृपालि आगिआ इह दीनी बारिकु मुखि मांगै सो देना।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (मलार की वार म० 5, पृ० 1266)

The Merciful Lord has commanded thus: Whatever the child asks for, let it be provided.

There is no delay in the appearance of the Master. The delay is in our earnestness and seeking.

If we need something, we will go on searching for it in spite of any and all disappointments. If diamonds and rubies are mixed with stones, we should not throw them away simply because it is difficult to separate the jewels from the stones. There must first be the pangs of separation, and then the Lord Himself will bring about the meeting with the true Master.

Disadvantage of being without a Master.

This is the Iron Age in its full prime. The mind and senses are in their full power and ordinary men are avid for sense pleasures. They have adopted the principle of 'eat, drink and be merry'. They see no reality beyond the body. They think of the body alone, and do not know the soul that gives it life. Is not the soul that gives life to the body, superior to it? Actually, the body is to be respected and honoured only because of the soul. After the soul leaves, no one keeps the

body even for a moment. It is consigned to the fire or the grave at the earliest opportunity.

If one confines his attention only to the body, and becomes entangled in the world, losing sight of his soul that gives it life, then what good would it be to him even if he should gain the whole world? We should try to understand the true purpose of, and the profit we intend to make in, this life. Is not life more than meat, and the body more than raiment?

Man, even if he knows all the sciences and reaps their fruits, still remains a sufferer. What is the cause of this? It is a fact that he has gained control over the forces of nature before gaining control over his own self. It is fashionable nowadays for people to say that they have nothing to do with the Lord, and have no need for a Master. It is surprising that we need a teacher to learn ordinary things, but have no need for one to teach us Spirituality. Is the learning of Spirituality, then, so very-simple and easy a matter?

Human life is the highest of all, and one can meet the Lord only when he is in the human form. Man, however, constantly wanders about outside. He does not enter the temple of the body, and as a consequence, he does not know either himself or the Lord. The key of this temple is with the Master. After getting it from Him, the devotee ascends to the Subtle and Causal regions and is united with the Lord.

Without meeting a Master, this human life is wasted and one does not accomplish the task expected of him. The Gurus say that the life of a person who is not initiated is ill-spent. He dies the death of a dog, barking all the while. He feeds on dirt like pigs. He carries the burden of the world like a donkey and dies while carrying it. He spreads poison like a snake.

गुर मंत्र हीणस्य जो प्राणी ध्रिगंत जनम भ्रसटणह।।
कूकरह सूकरह गरधभह काकह सरपनह तुलि खलह।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (सहसकृति म० 5, पृ० 1356)

Cursed is he and his life is ill-spent, who has not obtained the Guru Mantra; he is like a dog, a crow or a pig; like a donkey or a snake is he.

Cursed is the life of one, who has not served a Master. He is devoid of devotion and wastes his life. What then was the use of his coming into the world?

धिगु धिगु मनमुखि जनमु गवाइआ।।
पूरे गुर की सेव न कीनी हरि का नामु न भाइआ।।
-- आदि ग्रन्थ (भैरों म० 3, पृ० 1130)

Cursed, cursed is the self-willed manmukh, who wastes his life away. He does not serve the Perfect Guru; he does not Love the Name of the Lord.

भाई रे भगतिहीणु काहे जगि आइआ।।
पूरे गुर की सेव न कीनी बिरथा जनमु गवाइआ।।
-- आदि ग्रन्थ (सिरीराग म० 3, पृ० 64)

O brother, why was a person devoid of Devotion born? He did not serve the Master, and wasted his life.

We are full of the accumulated sins of ages.

जनम जनम की इसु मन कउ मलु लागी काला होआ सिआहु।।
-- आदि ग्रन्थ (सोरठ की वार म० 3, पृ० 651)

The filth of countless incarnations sticks to this mind; it has become pitch dark.

These sins can only be removed by the practice of *Shab*d and the aid of a Master. He, who is without a Master, cannot obtain *Shabd* and rid himself of sins.

बिनु गुर मैलु न उतरै बिनु हरि किउ घर वासु।।
एको सबदु वीचारीऐ अवर तिआगै आस।।
-- आदि ग्रन्थ (सिरीराग म० 1, पृ० 18)

Without the Master dirt cannot be removed. Except the Lord there is no other home. Be attuned to Shabd alone and abandon all other hopes.

One cannot be truly happy in the enjoyment of the worldly, sensual pleasures. The real happiness lies in spiritual bliss, which comes from union with the Lord; and this cannot be had without a Master.

जे लख इसतरीआ भोग करहि नव खंड राजु कमाहि।।
बिनु सतिगुर सुखु न पावई फिरि फिरि जोनी पाहि।।
-- आदि ग्रन्थ (सिरीराग म० 3, पृ० 26)

Even if you enjoy the company of millions of women; even if you rule over the nine regions; you cannot get bliss without a Master; you are born again and again.

Without a Master, all die weeping. They are burned by the hidden fire of *Maya*, and get no peace.

बिनु सतिगुर सभ मुई बिललाइ।। अनदिनु दाझहि साति न पाइ।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (धनासरी म० 3, पृ० 664)

Without the Guru, all die weeping in agon. Night and day, they burn, and find no peace.

लख पीर पैकाबर अउलीए लख काजी मुलां सेख।।

किसै सांति न आईआ बिनु सतिगुर के उपदेस।।

-- जनम साखी, गुरु नानक, भाई बाला

Be he a leader, a prophet or a seer, be he a judge, a preacher or a ruler; no one ever got peace of mind except through the blessing of a Master. (Janam Sakhi)

The inner eye of an egotistic or proud person does not open. He remains blind, acts in the dark and suffers from being entangled with attachment and *Maya*.

मनमुखि अंधा अंधु कमावै बिखु खटे संसारे।।

माइआ मोहि सदा दुखु पाए बिनु गुर अति पिआरे।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (सूही म० 3, पृ० 753)

The self-willed manmukh acts blindly, and earns only poison in this world. Without the Guru, he suffers in constant pain, enticed by Maya.

All who are without a Master are misled and do not find the way to the door of the Lord. They go through repeated births and deaths.

बाझु गुरू जगतु बउराना भूला चोटा खाई।।

मरि मरि जमै सदा दुखु पाए दर की खबरि न पाई।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (भैरों म० 3, पृ० 1132)

Without the Master, people are blank and bewildered, and they suffer greatly, lost in error; they are born again and again; they suffer ever and know not the door of the Lord.

There are a number of disadvantages of being without a true Master. One remains drowned in *Maya* and has many worldly desires. He suffers from lust, attachment and pride

and does not make progress towards his destination. His egotism is not destroyed and the mind is not stilled. Without the Master all is dark; one sees nothing inside and can make no spiritual progress.

Without a Master, Spirituality cannot be properly understood, for one cannot know the method and can obtain no success.

गुर बिनु घोरु अंधारु गुरू बिनु समझ न आवै।।
गुर बिनु सुरति न सिधि गुरू बिनु मुकति न पावै।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (सवैये म० 4, पृ० 1399)

There is utter darkness without a Master; one cannot Understand without a Master; without a Master, Liberation is not attained.

The mind is like an elephant. The Master is the driver, who keeps it on the right path by using the goad of knowledge. One can obtain the key to spiritual progress from the Master, and can then ascend to the Subtle and Causal regions. Without a Master, the portals of the mind do not open, and one does not find the way Home. One may read many books and scriptures and talk and argue about the Reality, but will not realise the Reality.

कहु नानक निहचउ धिआवै।। विणु सतिगुर वाट न पावै।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (आसा की वार म० 1, पृ० 470)

O Nanak, one should meditate on the Eternal Lord. One does not find the way, without the Master.

One may read the Smritis and the Shastras and Puranas, and may reason, but he will not know the essence of the Truth.

सिमृति सासत्र पड़हि पुराणा।। वादु वखाणहि ततु न जाणा।।
विणु गुर पूरे ततु न पाईऐ सच सूचे सचु राहा हे।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (मारू म० 1, पृ० 1032)

They read the Smritis, the Shastras and the Puranas; they argue and debate, but do not know the essence of reality. Without the Perfect Master, the Essence of Reality is not obtained. The True and Pure beings walk the Path of Truth.

Without a Master, the fear of death and the Cycle of Eighty-four remain hanging over one's head, and he cannot cross the ocean of the universe.

जिना सतिगुरु पुरखु न भेटिओ से भागहीण वसि काल।।
ओइ फिरि फिरि जोनि भवाईअहि विचि विसटा करि विकराल।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (सिरीराग म० 4, पृ० 40)

Those who have not met the True Guru, are most unfortunate; they are subject to death. They wander in reincarnation over and over again, as do the most disgusting maggots in manure.

कहु नानक गुर बिनु नही तरीऐ इहु पूरन ततु बीचारा।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (सोरठ म० 5, पृ० 611)

O Nanak, one cannot cross without a Master; this is the Real Truth.

Without the Master, one does not develop devotion and does not acquire knowledge of or love for the Name.

बिनु सतिगुर भगति न होवई नामि न लगै पिआरु।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (सलोक वारां ते वधीक म० 3, पृ० 1417)

Without the Master there is no Devotion, and one does not love the Name.

बिनु गुर भगति न भाउ होइ।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (बसंत म० 1, पृ० 1170)

Without the Master, there can be no Devotion or Love.

भाई रे गुर बिनु गिआनु न होइ।। पूछहु ब्रहमे नारदै बेद बिआसै कोइ।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (सिरीराग म० 1, पृ० 59)

O brother, no one but a Master can impart Spiritual Wisdom. You may ask from Brahma, Narad or Veda Vyas.

All the scriptures and Vedas say that there can be no release without a Master. All are of one view in this respect.

सासत बेद सिमृति सभि सोधे सभ एका बात पुकारी।।
बिनु गुर मुकति न कोऊ पावै मनि वेखहु करि बीचारी।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (गूजरी म० 5, पृ० 495)

The Shastras, Vedas and Smritis all proclaim the same Truth; hold fast to the conviction that there is no release without a Master.

There is no salvation without a Perfect Master, and one does not find the Door of the Lord's abode without Him.

बिनु गुर न पावैगो हरि जी को दुआर।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (देवगंधारी म० 5, पृ० 535)

You will not find the Door of the Lord, except with the aid of a Master.

It should be further pointed out that a Master is not found without good fortune and the Grace of the Lord.

किरपा करे गुरु पाईऐ हरि नामो देइ द्रिड़ाइ।।
बिनु गुर किनै न पाइओ बिरथा जनमु गवाइ।।

-- आदि ग्रन्थ (सिरीराग म० 3, पृ० 33)

If the Lord is kind, we find a Master, and he will firmly establish your faith in the Name. No one can get this without a Master, and one's life is spent in vain.

It is a bad omen to see a man, who has no Master. He is in an unfortunate condition. It is impossible to describe the wretchedness of the man, who turns away from a Master or criticizes Him.

In conclusion, it may be said that the teachings of the Perfect Masters of the highest order have always insisted upon two basic points or principles. The first is the absolute necessity for a living Perfect Master, who can take the souls of His disciples back to their Pristine Home in the highest heavenly region. These Masters point out that a doctor, who died two thousand years ago, cannot heal people who are today suffering from disease. No more can a Master who lived some hundreds or thousands of years ago give people of today the true initiation or baptism, or connect the souls of the seekers with their Creator and thus set their feet on the path of true and final liberation or salvation.

The second is the importance of *Shabd Dhun* शब्द–धुन or *Naam* नाम, commonly called in English the Sound Current or the Audible Life Stream. It is the *Naad* नाद (Sound) of the Vedas; *Bang-e-Asmani* or *Kalam-e-Ilahi* (Divine Sound from above or the Word of God) of the Mohammedan Saints; the *Tao* and the *Way* or Celestial Sound of Lao Tze, the great Chinese spiritual Master; and the *Holy Ghost*, *Holy Spirit* and *Word* or *Logos* of the Bible.

Shabd-Dhun is the Supreme Creator Himself, vibrating and resounding throughout the whole creation and inside every human body. It is upon its wave that we have to return to our Pristine Home. Only a living Perfect Master is able to put souls in direct contact with this *Shabd Dhu*n or *Naam*, which ultimately leads totheir release from the cycle of birth and death.

These teachings are very clearly explained in the Aadi Granth, the holy book of the Sikhs, which gives the spiritual teachings that have been given by all Perfect Masters down through the centuries, and upon which most of the contents of 'Gurumat Siddhant' are based.

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